A

Christian Library:

CONSISTING OF

EXTRACTS from and ABRIDGMENTS of

THE

CHOICEST PIECES

OF

Practical Divinity,

Which have been publish'd in the

ENGLISH TONGUE.

In FIFTY VOLUMES.

By *JOHN WESLEY*, M. A.

Late FELLOW of *Lincoln-College*, OXFORD.

VOL. IX.

BRISTOL:

Printed by FELIX FARLEY.

M.D.CC.LI.



EXTRACTS

FROM THE

WORKS

OF

ROBERT BOLTON, B. D.

SOMETIME

FELLOW of BRASEN-NOSE College,

IN

OXFORD.

AND

RECTOR *of* Broughton, *in* NORTH-AMPTONSHIRE.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

WORKS

OF

BRITISH MUSEUM

ROBERT SOUTHEY, LL.D.

CONTAINING

THE POET'S OWN ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE,

AND

HIS OPINIONS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

1831.

A

TREATISE

Concerning the

WORD of GOD.

PSALM CXIX. 105.

Thy Word is a Lamp unto my Feet, and a Light unto my Paths.

OF all other Parts of the Holy Bible, this Book of the *Psalms* is fill'd with greatest Plenty and Variety of precious Lessons and Instructions unto eternal Life. The Choice and Flower of all Things profitable for the right Course of a Christian Life, is therein briefly contained. In them we may be acquainted

quainted with the Majesty and Mysteries of GOD; with the Sufferings of *Christ*; with the unfeigned Repentance, unwearied Patience, spiritual Wisdom, and wonderful Courage of the godly Man. In them we behold the Terrors of Wrath, and the Anguishes of an afflicted Conscience, the Comforts of Grace and great Deliverances, the wonderful Works of Providence over this World, and the promised Joys of that World which is to come. In a Word, all Good necessary to be either known or done, or had, is plentifully, as out of a rich Treasury, revealed and offered unto us in these heavenly Songs of *David*.

BUT above all, this cxixth *Psalm* is, as it were, a precious Jewel, or clear Chrystal; wherein we may see the right Temper and State of true Godliness; the Marks and Properties of all true Worshippers of GOD; the very lively Anatomy and Laying open of a good and gracious Soul.

THIS whole *Psalm* doth consist of Twenty-two Parts, even just so many as there are Letters in the *Hebrew* Alphabet; and every Portion containeth in it eight Verses; and every Verse of every Portion begins with the same *Hebrew* Letter. Which special and extraordinary Penning and Disposing of the *Psalm* declares these three Things:

1. THE diligent Intention of Mind, and careful Meditation of the Author, in the Framing and Composing of it.

2. THE Worth of the Matter contained in it; in that it pleased the Spirit of GOD to deliver it in choice and special Order.

3. A DE-

3. A DESIRE and Purpoſe, that it might more eaſily be learn'd by Heart; and often and earneſtly meditated.

THIS Part, which we have now in Hand, is the Fourteenth; and contains in it many gracious Leſſons, for our Inſtruction in heavenly Things, propoſed unto us out of the Practice and Carriage of *David*, that holy Prophet and *Man of* GOD.

IN the thirteenth Portion *David* had delivered ſpecially two Things.

FIRST, How by his Love, Reading, Study and Meditation in GOD's Word, he had attained moſt excellent Knowledge, Wiſdom and Underſtanding; ſo that thereby he was become *far more wiſe than his Enemies*; that is, than *Saul*, and all his politick Courtiers and Counſellors of State. He had *more Underſtanding than his Teachers*, than the great Doctors and Rabbins; notwithſtanding their deep Learning. He underſtood more than the grave and antient Men; notwithſtanding the worldly Wiſdom and great Experience they had gathered in many Years. Where, by the Way, take this Leſſon.

NOT all the Wit or Policy, nor all the Learning in the World, or worldly Wiſdom, can make a Man truly wiſe, (that is, wiſe unto Salvation) but only a powerful and working Knowledge, out of the holy Word of GOD.

ALL other Wiſdom doth only provide for the Body; for a temporal Happineſs in this Life; for a few (and thoſe but evil) Days, and leaves the Soul in a ſinful and wretched Eſtate; ſhortly, in the Day of Viſitation, to be overtaken and fearfully confounded

founded with ſtrange Aſtoniſhments, Horrors, and Deſpair; and hereafter, wofully to be tormented in the Lake, that burns with Fire and Brimſtone. But Wiſdom, out of the Word of GOD, doth ſo furniſh a Man's Soul with Grace, and all holy Virtues, that in Deſpite of all Creatures, he may live comfortably in this Vale of Tears, and in endleſs Joys in the World to come.

Now (I pray you) tell me, Whether is the truly wiſer Man; he, that for an Inch of Time makes much of his wretched Body, that muſt ſhortly rot in the Grave, and in the mean Time lets his immortal Soul, that can never die, ſink into the Dungeon of everlaſting Miſery: Or he, which by taking Sound and ſaving Counſel and Direction out of the Word of GOD, and howſoever he be hated and neglected of this vain World, yet yielding chearful and conſtant Obedience thereunto, provides unſpeakable Comfort, Reſt and Bleſſedneſs both for Body and Soul, through all Eternity?

IN the four laſt Verſes of the former Portion, *David* ſets down the Fruit, Uſe and Benefit, which ſprung from his Divine Knowledge. It ſweeten'd his Heart with much Comfort, and cheared him with *Joy unſpeakable and glorious*, amidſt all Croſſes; bridled and reſtrained him *from every evil Way*; kept and preſerved him in the Paths of Righteouſneſs; and bred in him a Hatred of the Ways of Error, Falſhood and Hypocriſy. Where, by the Way, I would give you this other Leſſon:

WE muſt be ſure, that we draw our Knowledge in GOD's Word into Practice, Action and Exerciſe; otherwiſe, it will not only be unprofitable and unfruitfull unto us, but indeed bring upon us a more fearful Condemnation. For, *He that knows his*

his Master's Will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many Stripes, Luke xii. 47. All our Knowledge is vain, except by the Power of it our Affections be sanctified, our Words seasoned with Grace, our Actions and Conversations guided with spiritual Wisdom and unfeigned Sincerity.

AFTER *David* had thus, in the former Portion, laid down unto us, and confessed what excellent Knowledge he had got out of the Word of GOD, and the precious Fruit and Benefit he had reaped and enjoyed by it: Now,

IN the first Verse of this present Portion, he makes, as it were, a Protestation; That he is enlighten'd and led in all his Ways only by this holy Word of GOD, as by a Light or Lanthorn: The Brightness whereof doth not only bring him into the Ways of Righteousness; but doth also guide him in all the Particulars of his Life and Actions; in all the Passages of his special Calling: For he saith; *Thy Word is a Lamp unto my Feet*: [That is, whereby I see the Way to Heaven, and the narrow Path thro' the Kingdom of Grace;] *and a Light unto my Paths:* [That is, a Guide to direct me in every particular Step, at every Turning, that so I may keep a straight Course, and the ready Way to the Kingdom of Glory.]

THAT *David* had thus resigned up himself to be guided and governed by the glorious Light of GOD's holy Word, appears in the Verses following.

FIRST, in *Ver.* 106. by a solemn Oath and sacred Resolution to keep GOD's righteous Judgments, and an unfeigned Purpose to perform the same;

ſame; *I have ſworn, and will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous Judgments.*

SECONDLY, in *Ver.* 107. by his Patience and Sufferance of Wrongs, Diſgraces and Afflictions, which the wicked and prophane World heap'd upon him, for his Profeſſion of Holineſs and Sincerity. For, except he had loved and followed the Light of Divine Truth, whenſoever the Fire of Perſecution and Tribulation, becauſe of the Word, had been kindled againſt him, he had ſhrunk back and fallen away: *I am afflicted very much, quicken me, O* LORD, *according to thy Word.*

THIRDLY, in *Ver.* 108. by the Offerings of his Mouth, and Calves of his Lips; that is, the ſpiritual Sacrifices of Prayers and Thankſgiving, and gracious Vows for GOD's Service, which, with a fervent Spirit, and earneſt Deſire of Acceptation, he continually offered unto the LORD: *O* LORD, *I beſeech Thee, accept the free-will Offerings of my Mouth, and teach me thy Judgments.*

FOURTHLY, in *Ver.* 109, 110. by his ſticking to the Word of GOD, tho' he was ſtrongly incompaſſed with Snares, with Dangers and with Death itſelf: *His Soul was continually in his Hand.*: That is, that he was ready and reſolved every Hour, rather to part with Life, than with a good Conſcience; to ſhed his Blood, rather than to forſake the Truth of GOD. *My Soul is continually in my Hand, yet do I not forget thy Law. The Wicked have laid a Snare for me, yet I erred not from thy Precepts.*

IN the two laſt Verſes, upon the former Reaſons he concludes the Point: That his Heart and Affections dearly embrace GOD's bleſſed Word, as a moſt

moſt rich and laſting Inheritance; and, that he bends all the Powers of his Soul, to follow the Light thereof, even unto the End. *Thy Teſtimonies have I taken as an Heritage forever, for they are the Rejoicing of my Heart. I have inclined my Heart to perform thy Statutes alway, even to the End.*

THUS you ſee in general the Meaning of this Portion.

NOW I come to a more particular Conſideration of every Verſe in Order; and thence to gather ſuch Doctrines, as may beſt inſtruct us in the Way to Heaven.

DAVID tells us, in the firſt Verſe: That GOD's *Word is a Lanthorn to his Feet, and a Light unto his Paths:* Which, that you may better underſtand, I will explain unto you the ſeveral Terms.

THE *Word* may be taken three Ways.

1. FOR the ſubſtantial Word of GOD, the ſecond Perſon in the Trinity, *John* i. 1. *In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was* GOD.

2. IT may be taken for the written Word; as it only ſtrikes the Ear, and informs the Underſtanding; but is not conveyed into the Heart by the powerful Aſſiſtance of GOD's Spirit. And ſo the Word is heard and underſtood of many, but returns unfruitful.

3. IT may be taken for the effectual Word, as it is *the Power of* GOD *unto Salvation*; as it is rightly underſtood, applyed unto the Heart and Conſcience, poſſeſt of the Thoughts and Affections, and practiſed in the Life and Converſation.

This

This Word thus applied by the Spirit of GOD, was a Light unto *David*'s Steps; and ſo is a Guide unto the Paths of all true Chriſtians, to the World's End.

THAT you may underſtand how the Word is a Light, you muſt conſider,

1. THAT *Chriſt* is called *Light*, *John* i. 4. The Miniſters are called the *Light* of the World, *Matt.* v. 14. The Faithful are *Lights*, *Phil.* ii. 15, 16. *The Way of the Righteous* (ſaith *Solomon*, *Prov.* iv. 18.) *ſhineth as the Light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect Day.* The Word of GOD is called a *Light*; as in this Place. But firſt,

CHRIST is Light of Himſelf, and originally; He is the everlaſting Spring of all the Light of Grace and Glory, both in Heaven and Earth. He is called, *The Sun of Righteouſneſs.* The Sun, you know, hath his Light rooted in his own fair Body, and receives that from none other; and with that, He enlightens the Moon, the Stars, the Air, the Earth, and all the World: Even ſo the bleſſed Son of GOD, *the Sun of Righteouſneſs*, hath in Himſelf, and from Himſelf, the Light of all Wiſdom and Knowledge, Mercy and Comfort; and from Him floweth whatſoever Light of Glory is revealed unto his bleſſed Saints and Angels in Heaven, or whatſoever Light of Grace is ſhed into the Hearts of his bleſſed Saints and Angels in Heaven, or whatſoever Light of Grace is ſhed into the Hearts of his Sons and Servants upon Earth.

2. THE Preachers of the Word are Miniſters and Meſſengers of this Light miniſterially. They are *as the Stars*, and ſo they are called, *Rev.* i. 20. They receive all their Light from the *Sun of Righteouſneſs*,

teousneſs, Chriſt Jeſus, and either do or ſhould convey and caſt their borrowed Beams upon the earthly, cold and darkſome Hearts of the People of GOD, that they might *turn from Darkneſs to Light, from the Power of* Satan *unto* GOD, *Acts* xxvi. 18.

3. THE Word is Light inſtrumentally; which being powerfully ſanctified unto us for our Salvation, and being holden out unto us by a lively Miniſtry, is as a Candle or Torch, to guide us through the Darkneſs of this World, unto our Eternal Reſt.

4. LASTLY, the Faithful are Lights, as they receive this Light, 1. Into their Underſtandings; whereby they ſee the Wonders of GOD's Law, the Secrets of his Kingdom, and the great Myſtery of Godlineſs, and the Way to Heaven. 2. Into their Conſciences; whereby they have their ſinful, miſerable State by Nature diſcovered unto them, and the Way to *Chriſt* for Remedy and Salvation. 3. Into their Affections; whereby they are enkindl'd with Zeal for GOD's Truth, Honour and Service. 4. Into their Actions and Converſation; whereby *they ſhine as Lights in the World, amidſt a crooked Generation, Phil.* ii. 15. And after the *Sun of Righteouſneſs* is once riſen in their Hearts, like the Sun in the Firmament, they ſhine more and more, in all holy Virtues, *unto the perfect Day*, untill they reach the Heighth of Heaven, and the full Glory of the Saints of GOD.

BY *Feet*, is meant his Mind and Underſtanding; his Affections, Thoughts, Actions; his whole Life, all his Ways. All theſe in *David*, were guided by the Light of GOD's Word.

LASTLY, by *Paths* are meant every particular Step; every Turning and narrow Paſſage in his ſpecial Calling. For this Light, the Word of GOD, doth not only *guide a Man's Feet into the Way of Peace*, and put him into the right Way to Heaven; but alſo goes along with him, enlightens and directs every Step, that his Feet do not ſlide. It ſo informs him with ſpiritual Wiſdom, that he lays hold on every Occaſion for the glorifying of GOD; deſcries every little Sin, and Appearance of Evil; diſpoſeth every Circumſtance in his Actions, with a good Conſcience, and Warrant out of GOD's Word.

THIS then is the Meaning of this Verſe. *David* had the Word of GOD working powerfully upon his Soul, as a Light: that is; As a Lamp is to the Life and Safety of the Body, in dark and dangerous Places; ſo was this Light to the Life and Salvation of *David*'s Soul, in the Darkneſs of this World, and Shadow of Death: *To guide his Feet and Paths*; that is, his Mind, Affections, Thoughts, Actions; his whole Life, all his Ways, and every particular Step and Paſſage thereof.

THIS Verſe being thus underſtood, let us now gather ſome Doctrines for our Inſtruction.

THE firſt ſhall be this: There is no Man can hit the Way to Heaven, or walk in the Paths of Righteouſneſs, through the Kingdom of Grace, unto the Kingdom of Glory, except he be enlightened, informed, and inſtructed in the Holy Word of GOD.

THE Second ſhall be this: The Word of GOD is a Light, not only to guide us into the Way to Heaven, and inſtruct us into our general Calling

of

of Christianity; but also to lead us along in a Course of Godliness, and to direct us in our special Calling.

I WILL first follow the former Doctrine; which in few Words, I thus propose unto you:

No Man can at first find the Entrance, or after hit the Way to Heaven, except he be enlightened and led along by the Holy Word of GOD.

THE Reasons of this Doctrine may be these which follow:

THE first may be taken from the Insufficiency of all other Means, to bring us to Heaven: As,

1. ALL the greatest Learning and deepest Knowledge in the World, will stand us in little Stead in this Business: Otherwise, it had gone well with many antient Heathens and Philosophers of old, who fathomed as deep, and reached as high in the Depths and Mysteries of all human Learning and Knowledge, as the Light of Reason could possibly bring them: And yet they were utterly Strangers to the Life of Grace, and *without* GOD *in the World. When they professed themselves to be Wise, they became Fools*, saith *Paul*, *Rom.* i. 22. They were puffed up with a little vain-glorious Knowledge here upon Earth, and got them a Name amongst Men: But, alas! what was this? When, for the Want of Divine Truth, they lost their Souls in another World, and their Names never came into the Book of Life. *Where is the Wise?* (saith *Paul* in another Place) *Where is the Scribe? Where is the Disputer of this World?* As if he should have said: All the Knowledge of the greatest Doctors and learnedst Rabbins in the World, without

Grace, vaniſheth into Nothing; into Vain-glory, Emptineſs and Air; nay, caſts them with greater Horror and Confuſion, into the Pit of Hell. *Every Man* (ſaith *Jeremiah*) *is a Beaſt by his own Knowledge*, *Jere.* x. 14. Except, beſides all other Knowledge, he be enlightened from above, and have that Divine Knowledge ſanctified unto him, he can come no nearer the Happineſs of Heaven, than a very Beaſt.

2. WORLDLY Wiſdom and Policy is ſo far from making Men wiſe unto Salvation, that it is not only ſtark Fooliſhneſs with GOD, but it doth ſtrongly ſet itſelf, and is at Enmity againſt GOD. Therefore, ſaith GOD; *I will deſtroy the Wiſdom of the Wiſe, and will caſt away the Underſtanding of the Prudent*, 1 Cor. i. 19. *Ahitophel* was ſo wiſe even in the Affairs of Kingdoms, and Buſineſs of State, that *the Counſel which he counſelled in thoſe Days, was like as if one had aſked Counſel at the Oracle of* GOD; and yet all this great Wiſdom in the End, terminated in extream Folly: For upon a little Diſgrace in the World, *he ſaddled his Aſs, and went Home unto his City, and put his Houſhold in Order, and hanged himſelf*, 2 *Sam.* xvi. 23.—xvii. 23.

ALTHOUGH the End of all worldly Wiſdom be not ſo ſhameful in the Eye of the World, yet undoubtedly it is moſt miſerable in the World to come, except their Wiſdom be ſanctified by the Light of GOD's Word. Carnal Wiſdom can neither preſerve a Man from Death, nor prepare him to die bleſſedly; it cannot ſtay his Life from going, neither can it ſtop the Curſe from coming; it cannot deliver him from Damnation in the World to come, but rather encreaſeth the Grievouſneſs of his Puniſhment: For in this Life it hath

kept

kept Poſſeſſion againſt heavenly Wiſdom: It made him uncapable of all good Inſtructions: It made him impatient of any Rebuke, and held him in Ignorance and Diſobedience all his Life.

3. No good Meanings or Intentions, without Knowledge and Warrant in the Word of GOD, will ever ſerve our Turn for Salvation; nay, indeed they are abominable in GOD's Sight, howſoever, Thouſands deceive themſelves in this Point. *Uzzah* had a good Meaning, when he put his Hand to the Ark of GOD, and held it; for the Oxen ſhook it: But notwithſtanding, the LORD was very wroth with *Uzzah*, and GOD ſmote him in the ſame Place, and there he died. *James* and *John* had good Meanings, when they called for Fire from Heaven to conſume the *Samaritans*, that would not entertain *Chriſt*; but *Jeſus* rebuked them, and told them, *they knew not what Spirit they were of.* *Saul* had a good Meaning, when he ſpared *Agag*, and the beſt of the Sheep and of the Oxen, to ſacrifice them unto the LORD; but notwithſtanding, *Samuel* tells him, That *he had done wickedly in the Sight of the* LORD, *and that the* LORD *had rent the Kingdom of* Iſrael *from him that Day.* *Peter* had a good Meaning, when he would not ſuffer *Chriſt* to waſh his Feet; but *Jeſus* anſwered him, and told him, *If I waſh thee not, thou ſhalt have no Part with me.* Good Meanings then are wicked Miſſings of the true Service of GOD, except they be guided by Knowledge and Ground out of the Book of GOD. Let no Man then tell of his good Meaning, if he be ignorant in the Will and Word of GOD: For certainly it will never ſerve the Turn; it will never hold out in the Day of *Chriſt Jeſus*.

4. No Will-worſhip, or Will-ſervice, no voluntary Religion, as the Apoſtle calls it, *Col.* ii. 23. which is framed out of a Man's own Brain, without Ground or Warrant in the Book of GOD; though it be performed with never ſo glorious a Shew of Zeal, will be any Way available for our eternal Happineſs: Nay, indeed, it is moſt odious in the Eyes of GOD, and ever liable to a very high Degree of his Vengeance.

THE *Papiſts* whip themſelves, vow Continency, perpetual Poverty, and regular Obedience; and yet is their Profeſſion and Practice both bloody and idolatrous. When the *Jews* worſhipped GOD after the deviſed Faſhions of the *Gentiles*, though their Meaning was to worſhip nothing but GOD, yet the Text ſaith, *they worſhipped Devils*, *Deut.* iii. 17. And GOD there proteſts, that therefore *a Fire was kindled in his Wrath, that ſhould burn unto the Bottom of Hell, and ſet on Fire the Foundations of the Mountains.* So hated of Almighty GOD is all Service and Worſhip deviſed by the Wit of Man, without Warrant in the Word of GOD.

5. LASTLY, not the Word of GOD itſelf in the Letter, without the ſpiritual Meaning, and the Finger of GOD's Spirit to apply it powerfully to our Souls, is able to bring us into the Light of Grace. This appears in *Nicodemus*, who was a great Doctor in the Law, a *Maſter and Teacher in* Iſrael; yet was a very Infant and Ideot in the Power of Grace, and Myſtery of Godlineſs. For all his Learning in the Letter of the Law, he had not yet made one Step towards Heaven; for he was not only ignorant of, but had a very abſurd and groſs Conceit of the New Birth; which is the very firſt Entrance into the Kingdom of Grace.

Thus

Thus you ſee, there can no other Means be named; not all human Knowledge, nor worldly Wiſdom, nor good Meanings, nor Will-worſhip, nor the Word itſelf in the Letter, which can lead us into the Ways of Righteouſneſs, or bring us unto Heaven, but only the Light of GOD's holy Word, holden out unto us by a profitable Miniſtry, and the Power of the Spirit.

A SECOND Reaſon of my Doctrine may be this: No Man can ever ſee the Kingdom of GOD, except he born again; except he become a new Creature, a new Man, as is plain in *Chriſt*'s Words unto *Nicodemus*. For our New Birth, is the neceſſary Paſſage from Nature to Grace. It is that whereby we are (ἡγιασμένοι, 1 *Cor.* vi. 11.) *ſanctified* and *ſet apart* unto GOD, from the ſinful Corruption of our natural Birth, and the evil Fruits thereof, to ſerve GOD in Body, Soul and Spirit. Now this New Birth muſt neceſſarily ſpring from the *immortal Seed of the Word of* GOD, 1 *Pet.* i. 23. It is the Seed of our New Birth, Salvation and Immortality. And you may as well look for Corn to grow up in your Fields without Sowing, as to look for Grace to grow up in your Hearts, or to reap the Fruit of Holineſs, everlaſting Life, except this immortal Seed, the Word of GOD, be firſt caſt into the Furrows of your Hearts, and be there received with Reverence and Attention, and nouriſhed with Prayer and Meditation. Hence it is, that GOD's Word is called, *The Word of Salvation*, *Acts* xiii. 26. *The Word of Grace*, *Acts* xiv. 3. *The Word of Life*, *Phil.* ii 16. *The Power of* GOD *unto Salvation*, *Rom.* i. 16. For there is no Power of Grace, or ſpiritual Life, to be had ordinarily upon Earth, or Salvation to be hoped for in Heaven; except a Man be enlightened with the Knowledge, and enlivened

livened with the Power of the Holy Word of GOD. There is no Entring into the Kingdom of GOD, except a Man be new born. And there is no New Birth, without the immortal Seed, the Word of GOD. And therefore, without Knowledge and Direction in the Word of GOD, no Salvation.

THE third Reaſon of my Doctrine is this: The Word of GOD hath only the Power to ſearch into and to ſanctify the whole Man, even to the inmoſt Thoughts of the Heart. All the Devices and Imaginations of Man's Heart, lie without the Walk of human Juſtice and Cenſure: No Word or Writing of Man is able to bridle them, or bring them within Compaſs: No Law of Nature, or Nations, can affright or reſtrain the Freedom and Wandrings of Thoughts: Only the Word of GOD can ſearch and ſanctify them. *The Weapons of our Warfare* (ſaith *Paul*) *are not carnal, but mighty through* GOD *to caſt down Strong-holds; caſting down Imaginations, and every Thing that is exalted againſt the Knowledge of* GOD, *and bringing into Captivity every Thought unto the Obedience of* Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* x. 4, 5.

THUS you have this firſt Doctrine plainly proved and confirmed unto you: And now I come unto the Uſe thereof.

THIS Doctrine may ſerve for Admonition to all thoſe, who by the Light of GOD's Word have already found and are enter'd into the Way to Heaven; that they would ſuffer themſelves with Humility, Obedience and Conſtancy, to be led along in a Courſe of Sanctification, by the holy Guidance and Direction thereof; that they would ſhine daily more and more in all Chriſtian Virtues,

Exer-

Exercises and Duties. For it is the Property of all those, who are new-born by the immortal Seed of the Word and the Spirit of Grace, to long after and earnestly *desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby* in Knowledge, Comfort and new Obedience.

LOOK to it then, I beseech you, whosoever hath already tasted of the good Word of GOD, and received into his Soul some Glimpses of heavenly Light; let him follow hard *towards the Mark, for the Prize of the high Calling of* GOD, *in* Christ Jesus: Let him set his best Desires, Affections and Endeavours, to grow in all holy Knowledge, in the Light of GOD's Word, and chearful Obedience unto the same. For it is a special Note and Mark of a Man, that is truly religious, to go forward and encrease in Grace and Understanding: He must be like the Sun, which, rising in the East, enlargeth his glorious Light and Heat, until he reach the Heighth of Heaven. But, as one well notes, the true Christian must not be like *Hezekiah*'s Sun, which went backward. If a Man fall away from good Beginnings, he adds Weight unto the Wrath of GOD, and doubles his Damnation. He must not be like *Joshua*'s Sun, that stood still. It is so far to Heaven, and the Way so narrow, so rough, and full of Dangers and Difficulties, that he which stands at a Stay, will light short. The Bridegroom will be enter'd in, and the Gate shut, before he come. And he that endeavours not to be better, will by little and little grow worse, and at length become stark naught. He therefore must be like *David*'s Sun, that great and glorious Giant of the Heavens, *that like a Bridegroom comes out of his Chamber, and as a Champion rejoiceth to run his Race.* One Grace in GOD's Child begets another; and one holy Action, performed with Sincerity of Heart,

Heart, doth inflame his Affections with Love and Zeal, with Courage and Reſolution, to undertake more, and to go through with all the Affairs of GOD. For He alone knows the invaluable Worth of heavenly Jewels; and therefore is raviſhed with their Beauty, and grows unſatiable in his Deſires and Longings after them. He is ſtill toiling and labouring in the Trade of Chriſtianity, for more Gain of Grace, Increaſe of Comfort, and further Aſſurance of the Joys of Heaven. If then you would be aſſured, that you are in the Way of Happineſs, be ſure to be led on by the Light of the Word in all heavenly Knowledge, ſpiritual Wiſdom, and holy Obedience.

ANOTHER Uſe of this Doctrine, is for Inſtruction to all; whether they be natural or ſpiritual; ignorant or inſtructed in the Word of GOD: That they make it their chief Care, zealouſly and conſtantly to hear, attend and underſtand the holy Word of GOD; and to be guided by the Light thereof, in all the Paſſages of their Life and Converſation.

1. AND in this Point, I will firſt lay down unto you certain Motives, that may induce you thereunto.

2. SOME Cautions to forewarn you of Lets and Temptations, that may withdraw you therefrom.

3. AND laſtly, ſome needful Inſtructions for your right Carriage therein.

ONE Motive to ſtir us up to a reverent Attention, in hearing the Word of GOD; to a Love of the heavenly Knowledge therein contained, and a ſincere Practice of it in our Lives and Converſations,

tions, may be this: The Word of GOD is, as it were, *an Epiſtle or Letter* (as one of the Fathers calls it) *written from* GOD *Almighty* unto us miſerable Men; publiſhed by his own Son, ſealed by his Spirit; witneſſed by his Angels; conveyed unto us by his Church, *the Pillar and Ground of Truth*; confirmed with the Blood of Millions of Martyrs; which hath already brought Thouſands of Souls to Heaven, and fills every Heart that underſtands it, and is wholly guided by it, with Light and Life, with Grace and Salvation. Now let us imagine a Man to have a Letter ſent unto him but by an earthly King, wherein he ſhould have a Pardon granted him for ſome capital Crime, whereby he were liable to a terrible Kind of Death; or wherein he ſhould be forewarned of ſome imminent Danger hanging over his Head, and ready every Hour to fall upon him; or, wherein he ſhould have aſſured and confirmed unto him, under the King's Seal, ſome rich Donation or great Lordſhip: I ſay, if a Man ſhould receive but a Letter from ſome Potentate upon Earth, wherein any of theſe Favours ſhould be conveyed unto him, how reverently would he receive it? How thankfully would he accept of it? How often would he read it? How warily would he keep it? Why in this royal and ſacred Letter ſent from the King both of Heaven and Earth, all theſe Favours and a Thouſand more, are conveyed unto every Believer. In that, we are forewarn'd, leſt by our Ignorance, Impiety and Impenitency, we fall into the Pit of Hell: In that we have promiſed and given unto us the Pardon of all our Sins, whereby we ſtand guilty of the ſecond Death, and the endleſs Torments of the Damned: By the Virtue of it, we are not only comforted with Grace in this World; but ſhall undoubtedly be crown'd with Glory and Immortality in the World to come. Such a Letter as this, hath the mighty and terrible GOD, moſt glorious in all

Power and Majeſty, ſent unto us miſerable Men, by Nature wretched and forlorn Creatures, Duſt and Aſhes. Why then, with what Reverence, Chearfulneſs and Zeal, ought we to receive, read, hear, mark, learn, underſtand and obey it?

A SECOND Motive may be the precious and divine Matter, which is contained in the Book of GOD, and that true and ever-during Happineſs, to which it alone can bring us. There is nothing handled in the Word of GOD, but Things of greateſt Weight and higheſt Excellency: As the infinite Majeſty, Power and Mercy of GOD; the unſpeakable Love and ſtrange Sufferings of the Son of GOD; the mighty and miraculous Working of the Holy Spirit upon the Souls of Men. There is nothing in this Treaſury, but orient Pearls and rich Jewels; as, Promiſes of Grace, ſpiritual Comfort, Confuſion of Sin; the Triumph of Godlineſs, Refreſhing of wearied Souls, the Beauty of Angels, the Holineſs of Saints, the State of Heaven, Salvation of Sinners and everlaſting Life. What Swine are they, that neglecting theſe precious Pearls, root only in the Earth, wallow in worldly Pleaſures, feed upon Vanities, tranſitory Traſh, and vaniſhing Riches, which in their greateſt Need will *take them to their Wings, like an Eagle, and fly unto the Heavens?* Beſides, only the Word of GOD is able to prepare us for true Happineſs in this World, and to poſſeſs us of it, in the World to come. That alone begets in us a true and univerſal Holineſs; *without which, none ſhall ever ſee the Face of* GOD: For it is impoſſible to live the Life of Glory in Heaven, if we live not here the Life of Grace in all our Ways. It is called *the immortal Seed*, becauſe it renews us both in our Spirits, Souls and Bodies: *In our Spirits*; that is, in Judgment, Memory and Conſcience: *In our Souls*; that is, in our Will

Will and Affections: *In our Bodies*; that is, in every Member. If the Prince of this World hath not blinded the Eyes of our Minds, it only is able to enlighten our Understandings, to rectify our Wills, to sanctify our Hearts, to mortify our Affections; to set *David*'s *Door* before our *Lips, that we offend not with our Tongues*; to set *Job*'s *Door*, before our *Eyes, that they behold not Vanity*; to manacle our Hands and Feet with the Cords and Bands of GOD's Law, that they do not walk or work wickedly: Nay, and it is able to furnish us with Sufficiency of spiritual Strength, to continue in all these good Things unto the End. And if we be once thus qualified, we are rightly prepared for the Glory, that is to be revealed. As before, this holy Word did translate us from the Darkness of Sin, into the Light of Grace; it can now much more easily, with Joy and Triumph, bring us, from the Light of Grace, to the Light of Immortality, and everlasting Pleasures at GOD's Right Hand.

A THIRD Motive may be this: We must be judged by the Word of GOD at the last Day. *If any Man* (saith *Christ*, John xii. 47, 48.) *hear my Words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the World, but to save the World: He that refuseth Me, and receiveth not my Words, hath one that judgeth him; the Word that I have spoken, it shall judge him in the last Day.* Whensoever we shall come to Judgment, (and we little know how near it is) two Books shall be laid open unto us; the one, of GOD's Law; another, of our own Conscience: The former will tell us what we should have done; for the LORD hath revealed it to the World, to be the Rule of our Faith and of all our Actions: The other will tell us what we have done; for Conscience is a fair Register,

Light and Power in our Underſtanding, which treaſures up all our particular Actions, againſt the Day of Trial; diſcovers unto us the Equity or Iniquity of them; and determines of them, either with us or againſt us. Now we muſt not take any Exception againſt the firſt; that is, the Law of GOD: *For the Law of* GOD (ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* xix. 7.) *is perfect, converting the Soul: The Teſtimony of the* LORD *is ſure, and giveth Wiſdom unto the Simple.* We cannot againſt the Second; that is, the Book of our Conſcience: For it was ever in our Keeping; no Man could corrupt it; there is nothing writ in it, but with our own Hand. Now, in what a terrible Caſe will a Man be at that Day, when he ſhall ſee the Book of GOD laid open before him; in the Light whereof he ſhould have led all his Life, and by which he is now to be judged; and yet know himſelf to have had no Knowledge, but to have been a mere Stranger in it? Though *the great Things of the Law* were many Times publiſhed unto him, yet he counted them but as a *ſtrange Thing.* Every Man's Conſcience is naturally corrupt, defiled and uncomfortable; and therefore, at the laſt Day, when it ſhall be awaken'd, open'd, examin'd, it will bring forth nothing, but the Worm that never dies; except it hath been formerly in this World enlightened, purged and ſanctified by the Word of Grace, and the Blood of the *Lamb.* Moſt accurſed then, and forlorn, will be the State of every ignorant Man, when he ſhall appear before the Judge of all the World: When he looks upon his Conſcience, he ſhall find nothing but Guilt and Horror: When upon the Word of GOD, after which he ſhould have lived, and by which he muſt now be judged; he will ſee Nothing but his own Ignorance, Blindneſs, and Strangeneſs in it: And therefore, all the Plagues and Curſes denounced in it againſt ignorant,

rant, wicked and unrepentant Sinners, ſhall be his Portion, in the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimſtone for evermore.

A FOURTH Motive may be, That fearful Puniſhment and Deſtruction, which at length will certainly befall all negligent and contemptuous Hearers of the Word, and thoſe that practiſe not the Power thereof in their Lives and Converſations. *Whoſoever* (ſaith our bleſſed Saviour) *ſhall not receive you, or hear your Words; when ye depart out of that Houſe, or that City, ſhake off the Duſt of your Feet: Truly I ſay unto you, it ſhall be eaſier for them of the Land of* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *in the Day of Judgment, than for that City.* The infamous Abominations, the damnable and crying Sins of the *Sodomites* are known unto all. Who hath not heard of thoſe Floods of Fire and Brimſtone, which ſwept them away, as the hateſulleſt Creatures that lived upon Earth? How rueful then, how lamentable will be their Condition, who are liable to more horrible Plagues than theſe? We ſhould therefore conſider, that the negligent, and unprofitable Hearing of the Word of GOD, is a Sin of a far greater Weight, and more fearful Conſequence, than we ordinarily imagine. When we hear the Miniſters, and Ambaſſadors of GOD, delivering his Will unto us, we are to conceive, that in a more ſpecial Manner, we ſtand in the Preſence of the great GOD of Heaven and Earth, who is cloathed with infinite Terror, Power and Majeſty; and we ought to proportion our Behaviour with Reverence, Humility and Obedience, to ſo great a Preſence. Earthly Princes will not endure Contempt at their Subjects Hands. They cannot abide to have their Majeſty lightly ſet by, their Laws and Commands neglected and trodden under Foot. Why then ſhould the LORD of Glory, of Juſtice and Power,

bear ſuch Indignities at the Hands of ſinful Men? Certain it is, if we weigh aright the Greatneſs of that GOD, before whom we ſtand, and our own Vileneſs, we ſhould hold it moſt juſt, if he ſhould preſently in the Place where we ſtand, puniſh our Sleepineſs, Talking, wandering Thoughts and irreverent Carriage at hearing his Word, with ſome ſudden and remarkable Vengeance, to be a Spectacle unto others, for *neglecting ſo great a Salvation*. It is GOD's great Mercy, that ſuch Plagues and Judgments are reſpited and deferred; for all the Curſes in the Book of GOD do naturally, deſervedly, and in the Courſe of GOD's Juſtice, belong unto the negligent Hearer, and diſobedient unto the Word of GOD. *All theſe Curſes* (ſaith *Moſes*, Deut. xxviii. 49.) *ſhall come upon thee and purſue thee, and overtake thee, 'till thou be deſtroyed, becauſe thou obeyeſt not the Voice of the* LORD *thy* GOD.

I COME now in the ſecond Place to the Lets, whereby a Man may be hindered from hearing the Word of GOD, profiting by it, and practiſing of the ſame.

A MAIN Hindrance is certain prophane and unwarrantable Conceits, which are entertained in the Hearts of ignorant and wilful People.

SOME think that there is no ſuch great Need of following Sermons, and frequenting holy Aſſemblies. They aſk; What can we not ſave our Souls unleſs we go ſo often to Church? Have we not the Bible, and other good Books at Home to read? Can we not pray and praiſe GOD at Home?

THEY might as well aſk; Can we not have a Harveſt unleſs we have a Seed-Time, and Rain, yea, both the former and the latter Rain? Or can

we

we not live except we have Meat? Certainly, no. No more can any Man be ſaved, unleſs he follow the Means appointed by GOD for his Salvation: Except he ſubmit himſelf to that Order, which GOD, with great Wiſdom, hath eſtabliſhed in his Church. GOD Himſelf hath appointed a publick Miniſtry in the Church; Paſtors and Teachers for the Gathering of the Saints; and is it fit that any private Exerciſe ſhould croſs GOD's publick Ordinances? No; It is both Inconvenient and Wicked, and GOD's Bleſſing is never to be looked for, upon any Action and Exerciſe, though never ſo good in itſelf, if his Will be not obeyed.

YEA, but ſome will ſay; It is good indeed ſometimes now and then to hear a Sermon; but what needs ſo much Preaching, and Sermon upon Sermon? Would they have us Saints and Angels upon Earth?

WRETCHED is that Man who is weary of the Word of Life; and he hath no true Taſte of holy Things, who loaths this ſpiritual Manna, though never ſo often rained from Heaven. There is no ſaving Knowledge of GOD in that Man, who deſires not to grow in the Knowledge of the LORD *Jeſus Chriſt*. Would we not think him diſtracted that would thus reaſon? I hope I have eaten Meat enough heretofore, and furniſhed myſelf with ſufficient Strength, ſo that I now need no more: Even juſt ſo doth he reaſon who complains of too much Preaching, and too many Sermons.

AY, but our Fore-Fathers (will others ſay) were never troubled with ſo many Sermons, and yet we hope they are well, and in Heaven.

OUR Fore-fathers wanted that glorious Noontide of the Goſpel of *Jeſus Chriſt*, which we by the Mercy of GOD enjoy. And therefore whoſoever of them periſhed without them, ſhall certainly be beaten with fewer Stripes, than thoſe that ſhut their Eyes againſt the bleſſed-Sun-ſhine of GOD's holy Truth, which is ſhed round about us; and *if it be hid, it is hid only to thoſe that periſh, in whom the God of this World hath blinded the Eyes of their Mind.* Beſides, if it pleaſed the LORD, in his ſecret Judgment, to ſuffer ſome of our Fore-fathers to live and die under the Darkneſs of Antichriſt; how much are we bound to bleſs GOD, that we are brought up in the Light of the Goſpel? And what heavy Plagues and great Damnation do we bring upon ourſelves, if we neglect or deſpiſe ſo great Salvation?

WELL, but (will others ſay) to the Attaining of eternal Life, what needs ſo much Ado, ſo much Preaching, Catechiſing, Expounding, Teaching and Praying with our Families, which are ſo much and ſo often urged upon us? When all comes to all, this is the Sum and End of all: *To fear* GOD, *and keep his Commandments; that we may love* GOD *above all, and our Neighbour as ourſelves:* And we hope we can do this, without all this Ado.

TO fear GOD, and keep his Commandments, (which is the whole Duty of Man) and to love GOD above all, and our Neighbours as ourſelves, are Matters indeed ſoon ſpoken, but not eaſily learned and practiſed. Is it enough, think you, to make a Man a good Carpenter, or Maſon, to ſay; That Trade is ſoon learned; and, I know as much as the beſt Workman can tell me: To build an Houſe, is nothing but to lay the Foundation, to rear the Walls, and cover it with a Roof? Is it enough to make a

good

good Husbandman, to say; I know as much as the best Husbandman can teach me: For Husbandry is nothing else, but to Sow and Reap? Is it enough to make a good Preacher, to say; It is no such great Matter, to make a Sermon: I know as much in that Point, as the best Scholar amongst them can tell me: To preach, is nothing else but to expound the Text, gather Doctrines, and make Applications to the Hearts and Consciences of the Hearers? But it would be long before these idle Vaunts would build Houses, fill Barns, or save Souls. There is far more required to these Businesses, than so: There is to be undergone much Toil and Care, much Trouble, Expence and Exercise, before any of these Works can be rightly accomplished. It is even so in the great Work of Salvation. Christianity is not so easily purchased and practised. There goes more to the Saving of a Soul, than to say; If that be all, I hope I can quickly learn to love GOD above all, and my Neighbour as myself: For before these, there go many Things; as, Knowledge of GOD's Will and Word; a thorough View of our own Misery and Corruptions, in the Glass of the Law; strange Agonies and sore Pangs in the New Birth and Sorrow for Sin, Refreshings and Coolings by the Mercies of GOD, and Merits of *Christ*; Faith, Repentance, a blessed and holy Change in the whole Man, both Body, Soul and Spirit. And then follows new Obedience; which consists in the Uprightness of our own Hearts; a charitable Carriage towards our Neighbours, and a zealous Constancy in all religious Duties and right Service of GOD: Which must be Universal, in Respect of the Object; that is, we must walk in all his Commandments: Total, in Respect of the Subject; that is, we must serve him in all the Powers of our Soul, and Parts of our Body; in our Thoughts, Words, and Actions; In all which

Things,

Things, if a Man be not particularly inſtructed, experienced and practiſed, his Love of GOD and his Neighbour is but in Word and Tongue, not in Deed and Truth.

WELL, but where there is ſo much Preaching, there is much Diſquiet and Diſcontent: For Men are abridged of their former Paſtimes and Pleaſures, and urged unto more Strictneſs of Life. When as all was well before, in much Quietneſs and Peace.

No marvel, though there be much Struggling, great Noiſe and Stir, before the *ſtrong Man* in the Goſpel can be diſarm'd and diſpoſſeſs'd of his Holds; that is, before *Satan*, having long reigned in the Hearts of ignorant and prophane Men, will be caſt out by the Preaching and Power of the Word. This Conqueſt coſts dear; it will not be had without Shedding the very Heart's-blood of our Boſom-Sin; which Fleſh and Blood will not yield unto, without Blows and Bloodſhed. You may aſſure yourſelf, where the Light of GOD's Truth begins once to peep out, and the Power of Grace to work, for the driving away Darkneſs, and ſubduing Prophaneneſs; you ſhall be ſure ever there to have three fierce and implacable Enemies ſtart up; *Satan*, wicked Men, and a Man's own Corruptions. While Men lie in Sin, Ignorance, and under the Shadow of Death, *Satan* lets him alone, meddles not much with them, never troubles or diſquiets them, but procures them all temporal Happineſs that can be; (for he knows, if they ſo continue, they are his own, and Children of endleſs Perdition:) But if once, by the Power of the Word, they be enlarg'd out of the Slavery of Sin and Death, and lay Hold upon Salvation, and begin to purſue after the glorious Liberty of the Saints, then the Foe begins to beſtir himſelf like an enraged Lion,

Lion, and labours with all Malice and Policy to hinder ſuch Proceedings. And in this Conſpiracy, he joins unto himſelf wicked Men, to rail, revile, and rage againſt Sincerity: And beſides, a Man's own Corruption doth fret, when it feels itſelf curb'd by the Law of the Spirit.

THE Goſpel indeed is a *Goſpel of Peace:* But of what Peace? Of Peace with GOD, with good Men, and a Man's own Conſcience; of the *Peace that paſſeth all Underſtanding:* But it ever proclaims open War againſt Wickedneſs, Prophaneneſs and Corruptions: It will have no Peace with Impiety and Rebellion againſt GOD. Hence it is, that our Saviour tells us, *He came not to ſend Peace into the Earth*; but rather, Fire, Debate, and the Sword: That is, whereſoever his Word is publiſhed powerfully, with Effect upon Souls, there it ſtirs up much Rage and bitter Oppoſition againſt GOD's Children. For, as there is no true inward Peace to the Wicked; ſo in this World there is no outward Peace to the Righteous; but they are ſtill exerciſed with one Croſs and Temptation, or other; either the Devil, or wicked Men, are ſtill plotting Miſchief and Miſery againſt them.

BUT the Troubles that ariſe at the Preaching of the Word, are not cauſed by it, but by Men's Corruptions. Would any Man think, that St. *Paul*, or his Preaching, were in Fault, becauſe there was much Ado whereſoever he came; and not rather the wicked Infidels, which could not endure to have their Sins reproved? Neither the Sower, nor the Seed, *Matt.* xiii. are to be blamed, that it doth not proſper; it is the Ground that is only in Fault: Which is either ſtony, or thorny, or barren; or elſe, it is the envious Man, that ſoweth Tares: The Sower doth only his Duty, and the Seed is

pure

pure and precious; it is Men's Corruptions, and prophane Hearts, that cauſe all the Stir. Amongſt four Kinds of Grounds, there is but one at the moſt (as appears in the Parable of the Sower, *Matt.* xiii.) in which the immortal Seed of the Word takes Root And whom it doth not humble, it hardeneth; whom it makes not meek as a *Lamb*, it makes as fierce and furious as a Lion, againſt the Power of Grace wrought in others, and againſt the Profeſſion and Practice of Sincerity.

Now I come to acquaint you with ſome Sleights and Temptations of *Satan*, whereby he labours to bereave us of the Bleſſings of profitable Hearers, and to hinder the effectual Working of the Word in our Conſciences and Converſations.

THE firſt Practice of *Satan* is to keep Men from diligent Hearing the Word. If he cannot that Way prevail; in the ſecond Place he labours to make the Word fruitleſs and unprofitable unto them. And that he doth, by ſuch Means as theſe:

1. IF we break through all Lets, which might with-hold us from holy Aſſemblies; then *Satan* labours to work in us a Careleſſneſs and Heedleſſneſs, in liſtening to thoſe Things which are delivered, and that by a Kind of Heartleſſneſs in holy Things, by Dulneſs of Spirit, Drowſineſs, Sleepineſs, Gazing about, Talking, or ſuch-like. And ſuch Hearers as theſe, are never a Whit moved with the Word preached, but remain in the ſame State as they were before.

2. BUT if he cannot ſpeed this Way, but that we rouze up ourſelves to hear the Word of GOD, as deſiring with Care and good Conſcience to profit thereby: Then, in the ſecond Place, he ſeeks by

by all Means to fill our Heads and Hearts with idle Muſings and wandering Thoughts, which may diſtract and ſteal away our Minds from attending to the Word: And that he doth, either by ſuggeſting to us the World, and the Vanities thereof, as our Affairs and Buſineſs, our Profits and Preferments; our Pleaſures and Delights: Or, if this will not prevail; by caſting into our Minds Things, which in their own Nature may be good and religious; but becauſe they are thought upon out of due Time, they deprive us of the Profit of the preſent holy Exerciſe; which ought for the Time, only and wholly to take up our Minds.

IF this yet avail Nothing; but that we mark diligently and attentively, all the While, what the Miniſter delivers, then, in the third Place;

1. IN ſome, he makes it ineffectual, by nouriſhing in them a Neglect of Reading the Scriptures, and Ignorance in the Principles of Religion: So that tho' they attend never ſo well; yet they underſtand not the Sermons they hear. (Let the younger Sort therefore, to prevent this Miſchief, acquaint themſelves with the Scriptures from their Youth. And let the Miſery upon *Eli*'s Houſe, terrify negligent and indulgent Parents, 1 *Sam.* ii.) In this Depth, the Word is either buried as it is brought forth, or dies at the Church-Door.

2. IN others, he endeavours utterly to aboliſh all Thought of it; to drive and baniſh it out of their Heads, ſo ſoon as they have heard it. And that thus: If Men's Hearts be harden'd through Unbelief, or Cuſtom in Sinning, and like the Highway in the Parable of the Sower; then the Evil One comes immediately, and catcheth the Seed of the Word, as ſoon as it is ſown, out of the Heart;

as we may ſee many Times Birds, hovering greedily after the Sower, to ſnatch away the Corn, before it take Root in the Ground: Or otherwiſe, if the World hath ſtolen Men's Hearts, then needs not *Satan* much to beſtir himſelf; he knows full well, that worldly Cares will preſently choak the Seed. As ſoon as the Sermon is ended, and they turn their Backs upon the Church, there come immediately into their Heads whole Swarms of earthly Thoughts, and they are preſently plunged into the Cares and Plottings of earthly Buſineſſes.

IF this yet will not ſerve the Turn, but that the Word gets within a Man, and works upon his Underſtanding; ſo that, by his diligent Hearing of it, he furniſhes himſelf with competent Knowledge in the Book of GOD; then *Satan* caſts about another Way; which is, to make him content himſelf with a bare fruitleſs Knowledge, without practiſing the Power of it in his Life and Actions; to reſt contented with an Ability to diſcourſe upon Points of Religion, without inward Sanctification, and Subduing the Will and Affections to new Obedience, and ſincere Exerciſe of Chriſtianity. So that, for all his Knowledge, he neither meddles with Converſion, nor mends in his Converſation.

HE labours to hinder his Converſion, by planting in his Heart a Prejudice againſt, 1. Preaching the Law. 2. Diſtinguiſhing ſeveral States of unregenerate Men. 3. The Differencing the Children of GOD, and Children of the Devil, by ſpecial Marks. 4. Preſſing the Doctrine of *Chriſt, of Preſſing in at the ſtrait Gate*; and Gathering from Scripture thoſe which ſhall be ſaved, into a ſhort Sum. 5. And by making him ſuppoſe GOD a Being, that is all Mercy.

IF

IF this will not prevail, but a Man endeavours to draw his Knowledge into Practice, and to reform his Ways; then *Satan* plots with all the Cunning he hath, to make him reſt in a ſlight, ſuperficial and partial Reformation; to content himſelf with an unſound, or unſaving Converſion. For, there may be many Changes in a Man, from worſe to better; and yet he not be a true Chriſtian.

1. HE may be changed, from a notorious Sinner, to a civil honeſt Man: Whereas he hath been deſperate in lewd Courſes, he may grow ſober and moderate in his Carriage: And yet, for all this, continue in his Ignorance, a meer Stranger to the Ways of Godlineſs.

2. FROM civil Honeſty, he may paſs on to a formal Chriſtianity, and do and perform religious Services; and yet lie in his Sins, and want the Power of Inward Sanctification.

3. YET further, by a general Power of the Word, he may in ſome Sort be inwardly enlightened; he may have Underſtanding and Joy by the Word, and may do many Things after it, and forſake many Sins; and yet, for all this he may come ſhort of a ſound Converſion; if he ſuffer ſome one Sin to reign in him; if he do not entirely reſign himſelf, his Spirit, Soul and Body to the LORD's Service, and ſtudy to pleaſe Him in all Things. For this is a certain Rule: *That true Turning unto* GOD, *and the Remaining in the Practice of any one Sin, cannot ſtand together.*

THESE Changes a Man may have, and yet the great Work of Regeneration not be wrought upon him. For where there is a ſound Converſion, there a Man is wholly ſanctified unto GOD; to ſerve Him

in his whole Man, both Body, Soul and Spirit. He ſhakes Hands with all Sins, he ſells all for the Jewel of the Goſpel; he regards not Sin in his Heart, but hath a Reſpect to all GOD's Commandments.

ON the other Hand, if but one Sin be unſold, the Man continues ſtill a Bondſlave of Hell. By one little Hole a Ship will ſink into the Bottom of the Sea. The Stab of a Pen-knife to the Heart, will as well ſpeed a Man, as all the Daggers that killed *Cæſar* in the Senate-houſe. The Soul will be ſtrangled with one Cord of Vanity, as well as with all the Cart-ropes of Iniquity: Only, the more Sins, the more Plagues, and fiercer Flame in Hell: But he that lives and dies impenitent in One, it will be his Deſtruction. One Dram of Poiſon will diſpatch a Man; and one reigning Sin will bring him to endleſs Miſery. Let us take Heed therefore, when we go about Reformation, leſt we be ſurprized by this Craft of *Satan*. Let us reſolve upon a thorough Reformation; which, when we ſhall carefully and earneſtly go about, *Satan* will be ſure to ſet upon us, as *Pharaoh* did upon *Moſes* and *Aaron*; when the LORD had commanded them to go three Days Journey in the Deſert, to do Service unto Him, that by all Means he might hinder them in this holy Buſineſs.

1. IF they will needs fear GOD, He ſtands not much upon it, but that they may do it outwardly, and in Profeſſion, ſo that they will continue in *Egypt*, within the Kingdom of Darkneſs, and lie ſtill in their Sins.

2. IF they will not reſt here, but will needs go out of the Kingdom of Darkneſs, he is not much againſt it, but that they may go the half Way; that

is,

is, He will ſuffer them to forego the outward Practice of many Sins, ſo that inwardly their Heart nouriſh and embrace them ſtill.

3. IF they deſire and endeavour to become new Men, both inwardly and outwardly, to be ſanctified in Actions and Affections, to ſerve GOD both in Soul and Body, He will yet yield ſo far, that they may be rid of ſome Sins, both in Heart and Practice; as perhaps, of Sins of Cuſtom; but then He will be a Sollicitor unto them, to retain other Sins; as perhaps, Sins of Nature. For Example: It may be they may both forbear the outward Practice, and alſo inwardly loath Swearing, Drunkenneſs, and other ſuch like Sins of Cuſtom; but they will cheriſh in the Boſom of their Affections, Pride, Luſt, Anger, and ſuch other Sins, the natural Brood of original Corruption.

4. BUT if they alſo conquer theſe, then he tempts them mainly to continue at leaſt in Worldlineſs. For this in many Men's Hearts hath greater Power, and bears more Sway than Nature, or natural Affection. He will ſuggeſt unto them, that upon an eager Purſuit of Gain, depends their Livelihood, their Content and Happineſs in the World; ſo that perhaps at laſt, after all this, they reſt and ſettle themſelves upon Sins of Advantage; as, unlawful and exceſſive Gaining, Earthly-mindedneſs, Serving the Times, and ſuch like.

5. BUT if by the Grace of GOD any be ſo bleſſed, as reſolutely to paſs through all theſe Temptations, ſo that they will not leave ſo much as an Hoof behind them, in his Kingdom of Darkneſs; then this ſpiritual *Pharoah* preſently arms himſelf with all the Crafts of Hell, with Legions of Fiends, and Princes of the Darkneſs of this World; with

all his Malice; with the Fire and furious Rage of prophane Wretches; with the ſharp Swords and impoiſoned Arrows of lying Tongues; and with all other Advantages, which either the loweſt Hell, or the wide, wicked World can afford. And thus appointed, he purſues, with bloody and implacable Fury, all thoſe who have eſcaped out of this Captivity, far more eagerly and enviouſly, than ever *Pharaoh* did the *Iſraelites:* That either he may bring them back again into his Bondage, or elſe take them quite away, and deſtroy them; that they may not attain the full Light of the Saints, nor do long Service unto the LORD. And certainly, if all the Power of Hell, the ſtrongeſt Temptations, the Scourge of Tongues, the World's Malice, the ſpightful Spirit of Prophaneneſs, the Frownings of Friends, the ſcornful Inſolencies of Enemies, the curſed and enticing Cries of our old Companions; if wicked Men, or damn'd Devils be able to prevail, he will be ſure to ſtay them, before they enter into the State of Grace and true Bleſſedneſs. But yet, if a Man put on *Paul*'s Armour, in *Eph.* vi. *David*'s royal Courage, *Pſal.* iii. 6. *Moſes*'s princely Zeal, that *he will not leave a Hoof behind*; that is, That he will not leave one Corruption unmortified, one Affection unſanctified, one rebellious Action unreformed, one known Sin unrepented of, and unforſaken; one holy Duty unperform'd, one Commandment unobeyed; why then, he may look for a more glorious ſpiritual Deliverance, than *Moſes* had a temporal: Hell and Confuſion ſhall ſwallow up all his Enemies; but into his Heart ſhall be plentifully poured Comfort, Joy and Peace; and upon his Head ſhall a Crown of Immortality flouriſh forever.

I HAVE ſtayed very long upon the fifth Practice of *Satan*; for I know it is much and often exerciſ-

ed,

ed, and with great Succeſs: When by diligent Hearing of GOD's Word, faithfully urged upon them, they are driven to a Reformation but in Part, and by Halves; unſound and unſaving: So that it may be, they may forſake Sins of Cuſtom; as Lying, Swearing or Drunkenneſs; but keep Sins of Nature; as Pride, Luſt, and Anger: Or it may be, they may forſake both theſe Kinds of Sins, and keep Sins of Advantage; as, Oppreſſion, unlawful Gaining, or Grinding the Faces of the Poor: Or they may leave all theſe, and yet keep Sins of Company; as idle and vain Talking, Railing againſt and Slandering their Neighbours, and uncharitable Judging and Cenſuring their Brethren. It may be, they may be careful in their general Calling of Chriſtianity; but unfaithful in thoſe particular Callings, wherein GOD in his Providence hath ſet them: Or contrarily; they may be of Chriſtian Behaviour abroad, and in publick; as, at Sermons, and in the Church: But not at Home, and in their private Families; never teaching, or praying with them. They may ſeem zealous in the Commandments of the firſt Table, and about the Service of GOD; but not in the Second towards their Neighbour: Or, they may deal juſtly and honeſtly with others; but be void of the Knowledge and Fear of GOD.

IF *Satan* can prevail with a Man, any of theſe Ways, he keeps him his own: For he that is ſoundly converted, juſtified and ſanctified indeed, muſt needs be out of Love with every Sin, with the whole Courſe of Iniquity; and with Sincerity and Chearfulneſs embrace the entire Body of Chriſtianity, and have a Regard to all GOD's Commandments.

6. Now I come to a ſixth Device of *Satan*, whereby he labours to make the Word unprofitable. If he cannot ſtay us in our Reformation, but that we will caſt away all Sins, then he ſeeks by all Means to hinder our Continuance. If the Seed of the Word be received with Joy, and ſpring up for a Time, he raiſeth Perſecution, Tribulation or Croſſes, whereby it is blaſted, and comes to nothing. The unclean Spirit may for a Time go out of a Man, and walk through dry Places; but if it be poſſible, he will return with ſeven other Spirits worſe than himſelf: And the End of that Man is worſe than the Beginning. A Man may fly from the Pollution of the World, but by the Policy of *Satan*, he may be entangled again therein: He may be waſh'd for awhile, and yet afterwards wallow again in the Mire of Sin: He may be endued with an inferior Sanctification of the Spirit; and afterwards *tread under Foot the Son of* GOD: He may be a Partaker of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and yet, after a Time, fall away to the *very Deſpiting of the Spirit of Grace*.

LET every Man take Heed then, in the Name of GOD, leſt by the Temptations of *Satan* he be turned back again from a good Courſe; leſt after he be waſhed, he wallow again in the Mire of Worldlineſs and worldly Vanities; and after he hath eſcaped the Filthineſs of the World, leſt he be again entangled therein. Let us beware of Longing after thoſe Sins, which we begun to reform; let us not luſt again after the Fleſh-Pots of *Egypt*, after we are in ſome good Sort enlarged from the Bondage of Sin, and Tyranny of the helliſh *Pharaoh*. It is a fearful Curſe to continue in Hardneſs of Heart and ſinful Courſes: But to leave them for a little, and to ſink back again, is to have GOD's *Curſe* bitter againſt us, (if we repent not,)

and

and the Fire of Hell made more hot for us. *If a Man* (as it is, *Heb.* vi. 4, 6.) *hath once been enlighten'd, and then fall away, it is impoſſible to be renewed by Repentance.* I know that Place principally to be underſtood of the higheſt Degree of Apoſtacy; but he that falls away from any good Courſe, falls towards that irrecoverable Fall, and makes himſelf more uncapable of Repentance, than if he never had been enlighten'd: And it is juſt with GOD, to puniſh ſuch with a reprobate Senſe, and Hearts *that cannot repent.*

IT then nearly concerns us, when once we have felt the Sweetneſs of Grace, and *taſted of the Powers of the World to come*; to drink deeper of the Waters of Life, and to *follow hard towards the Mark, for the Prize of the high Calling of* GOD *in* Chriſt Jeſus. When we feel any good Motions ariſe in our Hearts, let us labour to follow them, to nouriſh them, to blow them up, to make a Fire of them; leſt they only make a Flaſh, and paſs away as the Lightning. Let us put them in Practice with Zeal and Conſtancy, that we be not as the unfaithful Waters, which in the Summer are dried up; or as the dead Trees, which periſh in Winter: But that we remain pure and perfect, as the living Waters and Olives of the LORD. Let us make a Covenant, even *a Covenant* (as the Scripture ſpeaketh) *of Salt*, durable and perpetual, with the LORD, to live before him in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs all the Days of our Life: For to him that goes through with his holy Buſineſs, that *fights the good Fight of Faith, finiſheth his Courſe* and *overcomes*; to him, and to him alone, ſhall all thoſe glorious Bleſſings be performed, which are promiſed in the firſt Chapter of the *Revelation: To eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the Midſt of the Paradiſe of* GOD; *Not to be hurt of the ſecond Death*;

To

To eat of the Manna which is hid, and to have the white Stone of Victory given him; To have Power given him to rule over Nations, and to be lightened with heavenly Brightneſs, like the Morning Star; To be cloathed with white Array, (that is, with heavenly Glory) *and to have his Name* continued *in the Book of Life; To be a Pillar in the Temple of* GOD, (that is, a firm and immoveable Place of eternal Glory;) *To ſup with* Chriſt, *and to ſit with Him upon his Throne forever.* Thus ſhall he be honoured and crowned with the Excellency, Fulneſs and Variety of all Glory, Joy and Happineſs, who enters with Sincerity, and courageouſly ends his Race of Holineſs, and conquers in his ſpiritual Fight. But *all fearful Men,* (as it is, *Rev.* xxi. 8.) who ſlip back for Fear of Men, or Love of the World, or to ſerve the Times; all faint-hearted Men in the LORD's Battles, ſhall be puniſhed *with Unbelievers, with the Abominable, with Murtherers and Whore-mongers, with Idolaters and Liars, in the Lake, which burns with Fire and Brimſtone; which is the ſecond Death.*

IF the cruel Dragon cannot devour the Woman's Child ſo ſoon as ever it is brought forth; if he cannot reign again in a regenerate Man, brought forth by the Power of the Word, in the Womb of the Church; he caſteth out after him, Floods of outward Croſſes and Vexations. If he cannot wound him in his Soul, yet he will vex him in his Body, Goods, or good Name. If he cannot hinder him of Heaven, he will give him little Reſt upon Earth. If he cannot bring him into Diſgrace with GOD, he will be ſure to raiſe him Hatred enough, Malice, and Diſcountenance amongſt Men: He will do his worſt, to load him with all outward Diſcouragements; as, Poverty, Slanders, Scoffings, Rail-

Railings, Reproaches, Contempts, and a Thouſand other Perſecutions.

BUT in ſuch Caſes as theſe, let every Child of GOD comfort himſelf by ſuch Conſiderations as theſe:

FIRST, It is a Decree of Heaven, reſolved upon and ratified by the LORD our GOD, confirmed by the Experience of all the Patriarchs and Prophets, of the Apoſtles and Profeſſors of *Chriſt*, of all the Saints and Servants, nay, and of the Son of GOD Himſelf; that, *through many Tribulations we muſt enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* So often therefore as we ſhall ſee any Afflictions coming towards us, let us acknowledge them to be ſo many Marks, that we are in the Way to Heaven: through which, if we but walk a little further with Patience, we ſhall deſcry a Crown of Glory, which is our own forever.

SECONDLY, Though by this Means, by theſe outward Croſſes and Afflictions, *Satan* diſchargeth upon us the very Gall of his Bitterneſs, the Poiſon of his Malice, and Arrows of his Spight; yet, by the merciful and medicinal Hand of GOD, they are returned upon his own Head; they ſtrike through the Heart of Sin, and become as precious Reſtoratives, to repair in us the Decays of ſpiritual Life: For in GOD's Children, Croſſes and Afflictions have theſe worthy Effects.

1. THEY ſtartle us out of our Security, Careleſſneſs and Coldneſs: They breed in us a Senſe of our own Wants, and the Neceſſity of GOD's Providence and Protection: They add Oil unto the Flame of our firſt Love, put Life into our religious

ligious Exercises, and Power and Spirit into our Prayers.

2. THEY curb and controul the Pride, Insolence, and Impatience of our Nature: They cool and kill the Heat and Intemperance of our Affections: They weaken indeed the whole old *Adam* in us, with all his Lusts, and Concupiscence; but give Strength to the new Man, with all his godly and gracious Motions, holy and heavenly Actions.

3. THEY make us contemn this vain, deceitful, and flattering World; the Love of which, is the eternal Loss both of Bodies and Souls in the other World: They happily wean us from the Love of it, and rent our dull Affections from the Earth, to which they cleave and lift up both our Heads and Hearts to Heaven, and to the Glory which is to be revealed.

4. LASTLY, they are as sharp and precious Eye-salves, to clear and enlarge the spiritual Sight of our Souls, too much dimmed with earthly Dust, and with gazing too long on the painted Glory of the World; that so we may see further into the great Mystery of Godliness, deeper into the Mass of our own Corruptions, wider upon the Vanities of the World, and higher into the Happiness of Heaven, and that great Beauty, Glory and Majesty above: They serve to breed a Distaste against transitory Delights: They are as Pruning-knives, to cut away the Excesses, Vanities, and unnecessary Cares that grow upon us; and so to trim us, that we may bring forth more profitable, plentiful, and fairer Fruits of Godliness.

THUS *Satan* is disappointed in his Policy; his Malice make a Medicine for our Souls; he purposeth

poſes and hopes, by Croſſes and Afflictions to turn us back, or to make us weary in our Courſe of Holineſs; but by the Mercy of GOD, they become as Spurs, to prick us forward in our Chriſtian Race; and as Hedges to keep us in, from wandering out of the Way.

THIRDLY, That GOD's Child may not be too much caſt down for Croſſes and Perſecutions, let him conſider, that howſoever *Satan* and wicked Men are the Inſtruments, yet our gracious GOD hath the greateſt Sway; He directs, limits, and moderates the Rage of all our Enemies, whether they be Devils or Men, as it pleaſeth Him; and ever certainly to the ſingular Good of his Children, if they be patient and faithful.

LET us then, in all our Sufferings and Afflictions, ſtirred up againſt us for ſticking to Sincerity, and keeping a good Conſcience, lift up our Eyes to the mighty LORD of Heaven and Earth; who, by the ſtrong Arm of his Omnipotence, holds faſt in a Chain, *Satan*, that raging Lion, that he cannot ſtir one Link further than He will give him Leave; he cannot go a Hair's Breadth beyond his Commiſſion: Nay, and that which he is ſuffered to do, makes one Way or other for our greater Good. Let us conſider, what a loving and tender-hearted Father hath us under his Correction; and holds in his Hand the Fury of *Satan*, the Malice of Men, the Power and particular Stings of all Creatures, as Rods and Scourges to reform and amend us; to keep us in a Courſe of Holineſs, and in the right Way to Heaven. His fatherly Love and Tender-heartedneſs unto ſuch as fear him, doth as far ſurpaſs the moſt compaſſionate Bowels of any earthly Father, as GOD ſurpaſſeth Man; and, an infinite Nature, a finite Creature.

ture. The Kindneſs of a Mother to her Child, is nothing to that Love which GOD beareth to a true Chriſtian. *A Mother may forget her Child, and not have Compaſſion upon the Son of her Womb:* But GOD neither can, nor will forget him. The ſtony Rocks and Mountains ſtick faſt and ſure unto their Foundations; but GOD's Love to his Child, is far ſurer and ſounder. *The Mountains ſhall remove, and the Hills ſhall fall down* (ſaith GOD by *Iſaiah*) *but my Mercy ſhall not depart from thee; neither ſhall the Covenant of my Peace fall away, ſaith the* LORD, *that hath Compaſſion on thee.*

CAN any Man ſtop the Courſe of the Sun, the Moon and Stars? Can he change the Seaſons of the Day and the Night? No more can any Creature, or a World of Creatures, ſtop and turn aſide the Streams of GOD's endleſs Mercies and Favours to his faithful Servants. *If you can Change* (ſaid GOD by *Jeremy*) *the Courſes of the Sun, and of the Moon, and of the Stars; if you can break my Covenant of the Day, and my Covenant of the Night, that there ſhould not be Day and Night in their Seaſon; then may my Covenant be broke unto* David, *my Servant; then will I caſt off all the Seed of* Iſrael. *Jer.* xxxi. 33. You may therefore make ſure of it; every ſincere Man is ever in GOD's Sight, for his Good and Preſervation; he is *graven upon the Palm of his Hand*, he is *ſet as a Signet upon his Arm, and as a Seal upon his Heart.* GOD is ever far more ſenſible, tender, and compaſſionate of the Sighs, Tears and Miſeries of his Children, than any Man can be of the Pricking of the Apple of his own Eye. He gives them Comfort in all their Afflictions, Deliverance from them, and Benefit by them. In all Troubles, he moſt certainly either quite frees them, or graciouſly preſerves them; ſo far as is beſt for his

his Glory and their Good; and useful for the Church and his other Children.

INDEED *Satan*'s Work and End is, to vex and discourage. *It is evermore the Work of the Devil,* (saith St. *Cyprian*) *that he may with Lies tear the Servants of* GOD, *and by false Opinions spread concerning them, may defame their glorious Name; that such as are bright in the Light of their own Conscience, may be darken'd and disgraced by the Reports of others.*

WICKED Men, because they are in Darkness, and their Works are evil, cannot endure the Children of Light, and their Holiness of Life. For this is the Root and Fountain of all their Malice and Cruelty; as appears, 1 *John* iii. 12. *Cain slew his Brother; And wherefore slew he him? Because his own Works were evil, and his Brother's good.* Hence springs all the Fury, all the Wrongs and Slanders, which are wont to be laid on true Christians: They are hated for their Goodness, and because they will not run with the Wicked *unto the same Excess of Riot:* They are filled with Contempt and Reproach, with the *Mockings of the Wealthy, and Despitefulness of the Proud,* because they will not swear, lie, pour in strong Drink, prophane the Sabbaths, follow the Fashions and Corruptions of the Times. In a Word, because they will not be prophane in this World, and damn'd in the World to come.

BUT GOD's End, in all false Reports unjustly raised against his Children, and in other Crosses, is to stir up and revive in them Zeal, Devotion and Faithfulness, in praying, praising and serving him; to purge out of them the Dross and Relicks of Sin; to humble them, and to bring them to a

true Denying of themſelves; to try their Faith, Patience, and Conſtancy; or for their greater Good, one Way or other.

IF all this will ſtand him in no Stead; if the Heat of Perſecution inflame the Zeal of the true Chriſtian; if Reproaches and Afflictions be ſo far from dulling his Forwardneſs, that they ſet an Edge upon his Affections; then, the laſt Temptation of *Satan*, to hinder the ſanctifying Power of the Word, and to make it unprofitable, is ſpiritual Pride; which, by his malicious Cunning, he extracts even out of his Graces and Virtues; and ſince he cannot keep Goodneſs out of the Soul, he uſes it as an Inſtrument, to wound itſelf. For when a Man is moſt enriched with Gifts, Graces and ſpiritual Strength, *Satan* ſeeks moſt buſily to make him proud of them, that ſo himſelf may loſe the Comfort, his Brethren the Fruit, and GOD the Glory of them. This ſpiritual Pride is, as it were, *Satan*'s laſt Intrenchment, which he holds the longeſt, and with moſt deſperate Pertinacy. Much ſpiritual Wiſdom, a great Meaſure of Humility, and the whole Armour of GOD is required to this Combat. For he is ſo exerciſed in the Point; that, if we be ſo humble, that he cannot make us proud of any Thing elſe, he will labour to make us proud even of our Humility; and proud, that we are not proud of our Gifts.

EXCEPT a Chriſtian continually watch over his Heart, this may ſteal upon him, before he be aware. But as a Man tenders the Salvation of his Soul, let him take Heed of entertaining a proud and over-weening Conceit of his own Graces, Gifts, or good Actions. Let him conſider, that the more ſpiritual Gifts and Graces he hath received from the free Mercy of GOD, the more will be re-

required at his Hands: And that he must shortly give a strict Account of the Usage and Employment of every one before the impartial and uncorrupted Tribunal of Heaven. Let no Man then, labour to make himself glorious, by those Graces which are none of his own; but let him glorify GOD with them, in Humility, Faithfulness and Sincerity; and improve them for the Owner's Advantage, that so he may render a comfortable Account at that great Day.

THUS far I have proposed Motives, to quicken you to a constant Hearing and Understanding of the holy Word of GOD; and acquainted you with many Lets and Temptations, which *Satan* usually casts in our Way, to hinder us therein.

NOW, in the third Place, I will lay down certain Rules and Instructions for your right Hearing of GOD's Word.

THAT the Word of GOD may be unto you the Word of Grace, the Savour of Life unto Life; you must look carefully, 1. unto your Preparation, before you come; 2. unto your Carriage while you are there; and 3. unto your Behaviour afterward.

I. FIRST, I am persuaded, the Neglect of a due Preparation, is the Cause that Thousands receive no Benefit by the Word; but that the Sermons they hear, are register'd, as in a Table of Remembrance, before GOD, as so many Witnesses against them, for their greater Condemnation at the Day of Accounts.

THERE is no Affair of Weight and Consequence, either in Nature or Art, but there is required some Preparation for the more happy and successful Ac-

compliſhment and Performance: How much more in the Affairs of GOD, Buſineſſes of Eternity, and Salvation of Men's Souls?

THE Ground muſt be prepared for the Seed, if we look it ſhould proſper: How much more ſhould our dull and dead Hearts be ſtirred up, and furrow'd, as it were, with Humiliation, Reverence, and Repentance; that by the Grace of GOD, and the ſanctifying Power of the Spirit, it may take Root in them, and ſpring up to eternal Life?

THE Ground muſt be laid, and ſome imperfect Draughts, Shadows, and Reſemblances premiſed, before a Picture can be done to the Life, or a full Proportion and lively Repreſentation pourtrayed: How much more ought the Ground of our Hearts to be prepar'd, that by the Preaching of the Word, the Image of *Chriſt Jeſus* may with a lively and freſh Impreſſion be ſtamped upon them?

WERE a Man the next Day to go about a Buſineſs that concerned either his Life, or Livelihood; would he not be muſing, by what Means he might work out his Deliverance? What Behaviour might be fitteſt, to win Favour in ſo weighty an Affair? How much more ought we, before we intrude into the Houſe of GOD, where Matters of our higheſt Intereſt are propoſed by the Miniſter of the Word; even our everlaſting Eſtate in another World? I ſay, how ought we to think with ourſelves, how we may make our Souls fitteſt to underſtand and accept the Covenant of Grace, to receive the Seal of the Spirit, and to get Aſſurance of that glorious Inheritance in the Heavens?

INDUCEMENTS we have, and Motives many, both from Precept and Practice, in the Book of GOD,

GOD, for the Performance of this Chriſtian Duty of Preparation. *Take Heed to thy Foot* (ſaith the Preacher) *when thou entereſt into the Houſe of* GOD, *and be more ready to hear, than to give the Sacrifice of Fools; for they know not that they do Evil.*

BEFORE thou ſet Foot into the Church, to hear the Word of GOD, be ſure to ſettle thy Affections, that they be ſober, moderate and fit to entertain the Word of Life. Let thy Heart be ſeaſoned with, 1. Softneſs; 2. Humility; 3. Honeſty; 4. Faith; 5. Teachableneſs.

1. IF thou do not preſerve thy Heart tender, ſoft and flexible, the Word will not make any deep Impreſſion upon it; all holy Admonitions, Reproofs and Inſtructions, will be unto thee as Arrows ſhot againſt a Stone Wall.

2. WE muſt bring with us an humble Heart, to the Hearing of the Word; for, *the* LORD *reſiſts the Proud, and gives Grace to the Humble. Them that be Meek, will He guide in Judgment, and teach the Humble his Way.* The proud Heart is ſo ſwelled with Vanity and Self-Love, that there is no Room for the precious Treaſure of ſaving Grace. But a lowly Heart, broken and bruiſed with Conſcience of Sin, is a fit Seat for the mighty LORD and his ſaving Graces, *Iſai.* lvii. 15.

3. WE muſt come with an honeſt Heart; which hateth all Corruptions, both in itſelf and others; which hath no Delight in any ſinful Pleaſures; which hath no Purpoſe to continue in any one Sin whatſoever; but is ready and reſolved, tho' it be much cumber'd with its own Corruptions, the World's Inticements, and *Satan*'s Craftineſs; yet to ſerve and pleaſe GOD, in all the Ways of his Com-

Commandments, and that ſincerely and continually. All profitable and fruitful Hearers, have ſuch good and honeſt Hearts, and are reſembled by the good Ground, *Luke* viii. 15. But that is a wicked Heart, and not fit to be wrought upon by the Miniſtry of the Word, which purpoſeth to cheriſh any one Sin whatſoever.

4. OUR Hearts muſt be ſeaſoned with Faith; otherwiſe, it will not ſink into them with Power. The old *Jews* heard the Word, but *it profited them not, becauſe it was not mixed with Faith in thoſe that heard it*, Heb. iv. 2. The fearful Threatnings of the Law, by Faith receive an Edge to wound, and pierce and ſtrike through our Souls. And Faith it is, that animates the Promiſes of the Goſpel with ſuch a ſovereign Sweetneſs, and powerful Comfort, that they are able, not only to raiſe us from the Depth of Remorſe and Fear; but alſo to put us into a Paradiſe of ſpiritual Pleaſures. But if the Word light upon a faithleſs Heart, it dies; it does no Good.

5. WE muſt bring with us into the LORD's Sanctuary, teachable Hearts, that readily open themſelves, to receive the LORD of Glory, with whatſoever he ſhall reveal unto us out of his holy Word. *Sacrifice and Burnt-Offerings* (ſaith *David*) *thou wouldſt not, but mine Ears haſt thou prepared.* As if he ſhould have ſaid: Thou haſt bored new Ears in my Heart, that I can now reverently attend unto the Myſtery of Grace.

WITH ſuch Hearts as theſe, muſt we come to the Hearing of the Word, if we look that it ſhould be unto us a Word of Salvation; and not to be of the Number of thoſe that offer the Sacrifice of Fools, and yet know not that they do Evil.

To

To learn how profitable this Preparation is, conſider the Words of *Zophar*: *If thou prepare thine Heart, and ſtretch out thine Hands towards Him: If Iniquity be in thine Hand, put it far away, and let no Wickedneſs dwell in thy Tabernacle. Then truly ſhalt thou lift up thy Face without Spot, and ſhalt be ſtable, and ſhalt not fear*, Job. xi. 13, 14, 15.

PREPARATION of the Heart, is here the firſt Step unto many glorious Bleſſings. The Heart muſt be firſt prepared, before other holy Duties can be fitly performed, or GOD's Bleſſings expected. And when thou haſt prepared thine Heart; then Secondly, pour it out in Prayer, before the Throne of Grace; Thirdly, purge it from Corruption; baniſh far, and bar out all Iniquity; Fourthly, be ſure to reform, inſtruct, and pray with thy Family, or thoſe that are about thee: Let no Wickedneſs, Ignorance, Prophaneneſs, Swearing, Drunkenneſs, or the like, dwell in thy Tabernacle, or harbour in thine Houſe; and then open thy Heart and Hands; for the Windows of Heaven ſhall be ſet wide open, that all Manner of ſpiritual Comforts, all the Bleſſings of Peace and Happineſs, may in Abundance be ſhower'd down upon thee.

I COME now to the ſpecial Points conſiderable in Preparation, before we preſent ourſelves to hear the Word.

THIS Preparation is an holy Exerciſe, which by Examination of our Conſciences, Purgation of our Hearts, Prayer unto GOD, and private Reading the Scriptures, maketh our Souls fit Veſſels to receive the Treaſures of Grace, offered unto us by the Miniſtry of the Word; that ſo they may be the

the more effectually wrought upon, and ſubdued to the Power and Practice thereof.

IN this Preparation, I conſider eſpecially theſe four Things: 1. Examination of the Conſcience; 2. Purgation of the Heart; 3. Prayer unto GOD; 4. Readineſs of Heart, to receive every Truth.

FIRST, Examination is a Duty practicable by all Chriſtians, at many Times, and upon ſundry Occaſions.

IT is either, Firſt, extraordinary; and that is, 1. Either in the Time of ſolemn Faſt, and general Humiliation, for ſome publick Plague and Calamity that lies upon the State or Church. We are then ſeriouſly to ſearch our Conſciences, that we may throw thoſe Sins out of our Affections and Allowance, which have their Part in pulling down thoſe publick Plagues upon us. Or, 2. When our Family is viſited with ſome ſpecial Scourge, and then muſt we make an impartial Inquiſition into our Hearts; leſt we be the *Achans*, who by our ſecret Sins, provoke GOD's Wrath. Or, 3. when ourſelves in a more private and particular Manner, are afflicted with ſome ſpecial Vexation; as, by ſome Malady and Miſery in our Bodies, with ſome Terrors and Fears in our Minds, or with ſome Slanders, Diſgraces, and Imputations upon our good Names: When GOD's Hand is upon us any of theſe Ways, we are preſently to conceive, that the Sins of our Souls are the true Cauſes of all the Miſeries and Croſſes which befall us; and therefore we are narrowly to enquire into ourſelves, and to caſt out our ſecret beloved Sins, thoſe lurking Rebels, the Breeders of all our Woe.

THERE

THERE is alſo, Secondly, a more ordinary Examination neceſſary, and that, 1. eſpecially every Day; that we may make the Score of our Sins leſs, and our Account ſhorter, againſt the Day of our Viſitation; that we may more entirely and comfortably preſerve and enjoy GOD's Favour and Protection, inward Peace of Conſcience, ſpiritual Joy, and Chriſtian Cheerfulneſs in all our Affairs.

2. BEFORE we come to receive, and be Partakers of the holy Sacrament of the ſacred Body and Blood of *Chriſt*, leſt by Neglect and Omiſſion of this Duty, we become unworthy Receivers, and ſo eat and drink our own Judgment.

3. BEFORE we go into the Houſe of GOD, and preſent ourſelves before his Meſſengers, to be inſtructed in his Will from Heaven, out of his holy Word; leſt this bleſſed Ordinance ſhould be accurſed unto us. You may ſee in the Prophet *Ezek.* xiv. 7, 8. how the LORD threatens that Perſon that comes to his Miniſters to enquire of them, and yet ſeparates himſelf from the LORD, and ſets up any Idol in his Heart. The LORD will ſet his Face againſt him, and make him a Sign and a Proverb, and cut him off from the Midſt of his People. Whence we may well infer, that it will be very dangerous for any to come to the Hearing of the Word, without Examination of his Heart, whether there be any Stumbling-block of Iniquity in it, or no.

SECONDLY, Becauſe that Examination of the Heart, to find out our Corruptions, tends eſpecially to the Cleanſing of it; therefore the ſecond Duty before the Hearing of the Word, is the Cleanſing of the Heart, 1. from Sin; which the Scrip-

Scripture beats much upon, *Jam.* i. 22. *Lay aſide all Filthineſs and Superfluity of Naughtineſs, and receive with Meekneſs the ingrafted Word.* This is a fit Preparative for Hearing the Word, as appears alſo by that Parallell Place, 1 *Pet.* ii. 1, 2. *Wherefore putting away all Malice, all Guile and Hypocriſy, and evil Speakings, as new-born Babes deſire the ſincere Milk of the Word.* As it is with the Body, when the Stomach is foul and clogged with bad Humours, we ſhould firſt purge it, before we feed it; (for otherwiſe, whatſoever we eat, doth but increaſe the corrupt Humours of the Body): So it is with the Soul, when it is clogged with Sin; whatſoever is heard in the Miniſtry of the Word, will be perverted and abuſed by it, and wreſted to our Deſtruction.

2. THE Heart muſt alſo be purged from all worldly Cares and Thoughts. The Cares of the World choak the Seed of the Word, and ſurfeit the Heart. Now, as it is with a Man in a Surfeit, he is not fit to eat, neither can he digeſt any wholſome Food: So, when the Heart is ſurfeited with worldly Cares, it is unfit for any ſpiritual Food. How then ſhall they profit by the Word, that jump out of their worldly Buſineſs, and from buſying their Heads about their Callings, into the Houſe of GOD? Truly, though they be never ſo diligent in Hearing, yet *their Hearts will go after their Covetouſneſs.*

A THIRD Duty before hearing of the Word, is Prayer. No good Thing can be expected from GOD, if it be not ſought by Prayer. And we find it laid down as a Condition required, *Prov.* ii. *My Son, if thou wilt receive my Words, and incline thine Ear to Wiſdom, and apply thy Heart to Underſtanding; yea, if thou cryeſt after Knowledge, and lifteſt*

liſteſt up thy Voice for Underſtanding, then ſhalt thou underſtand the Fear of the LORD, *and find out the Knowledge of* GOD. The Reaſon is, *ver.* vi. *For the* LORD *giveth Wiſdom*, and *out of his Mouth cometh Knowledge and Underſtanding.* Becauſe the LORD gives Knowledge, therefore you muſt cry for it unto him. What is the Reaſon that you pray for your *daily Bread*, and a Bleſſing upon it? Why *Deut.* viii. 3. *Man lives not by Bread only; but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of the* LORD. If this be ſo, much more ought you to pray for a Bleſſing upon your ſpiritual Food. That your Souls may therefore be nouriſhed by it; You ought 1. to pray for the Teachers, that they may ſo ſpeak, as they ought to ſpeak. And 2. for your ſelves, that you may be bleſſed in hearing: For no Man can receive any Thing, except it be given him from above. GOD ſaith, *I am the* LORD *thy* GOD *which teacheth thee to profit.* Iſai. xlviii. 17. Therefore there can be no Profiting by the Word, without Seeking unto the LORD for it.

FOURTHLY, you muſt be ſure to go with an open Heart, ready to receive every Truth that GOD ſhall teach you. It is ſaid of thoſe noble *Beræans*, *Acts* xvii. 11. that they received the Word with all Readineſs of Mind, *i. e.* Readineſs to receive every Truth. And *Cornelius* ſaid, *Acts* x. 33. *We are all here preſent before* GOD, *to hear all Things that are commanded thee of* GOD. (*That are commanded thee of* GOD:) Not what any Miniſter ſhall teach, be he never ſo good, or ſo learned; nay, were he an Angel ſent from Heaven, yet his Doctrine muſt be examined, *Gal.* i. 8. When there is ſuch a Diſpoſition in us, as to receive both in Judgment and Practice whatſoever GOD ſhall reveal unto us out of his Word, this is a precious Diſpoſition.

II. SE-

II. SECONDLY, let me proceed briefly to those Duties that are required *in* the hearing of the Word: Which we must the rather stir up ourselves unto, because we have naturally uncircumcised Hearts, and are dull of hearing. Now the principal Duties in Hearing are five;

1. YOU must set your selves as in GOD's Presence, whilst you are hearing of his Word, and consider that it is GOD, you have to deal with, and not Man; and that it is GOD's Word, and not Man's. It is the great Commendation of the Thessalonians, that they received the Word as the Word of GOD. Yea, it is the LORD Himself that speaks unto you in our Ministry. And the LORD is present in a special Manner, where his Word is preached, to observe how it is received, or delivered; and either to bless or curse the Hearers, or Speakers, accordingly. So that of this and such like Places, it may be said as *Jacob* said of *Bethel*, *Gen.* xxviii. 16, 17. *Surely, the* LORD *is in this Place:* and *how dreadful is this Place! This is no other than the House of* GOD; *this is the Gate of Heaven.*

2. THE second Duty in Hearing, is diligent Attention to what we hear; So Prov. iv. 20, 21, 22. *My Son attend unto my Words, incline thine Ear unto my Sayings, keep them in the Midst of thine Heart, for they are Life unto those that find them:* *i. e.* look as a condemn'd Man will hearken to the Sentence of the Prince; every Word he speaks, being Life or Death: As the Servants of *Benhadad*, when they were in their Enemies Power, 1 *Kings* xx. 33. they observed diligently whether any Word of Comfort would come from him, and they did hastily catch it. With such Diligence and Attention, poor condemn'd Creatures (as we are) are to hear the Word of GOD.

3. YOU

3. YOU muſt hear the Word with Underſtanding: Labour to underſtand what you hear. And to this End, the Miniſter muſt have a ſpecial Care to teach plainly, ſo as he may be underſtood. *Chriſt* calls upon his Hearers for this, *Matt.* xv. 13. *Hear and underſtand:* How ſhould we elſe profit by what we hear? *Underſtandeſt thou what thou readeſt*, (ſaid *Philip* to the *Eunuch:*) ſo ſay thou to thine own Heart; Underſtandeſt thou what thou heareſt?

NOW the Means to underſtand the Word, are theſe:

FIRST, Come to the Word, with a willing Mind to learn. You know the *Eunuch*, Acts viii. tho' he underſtood not what he read, yet becauſe he had a Mind to learn, the LORD provided a Teacher for him. Men love to teach willing Scholars; ſo doth GOD, when we come with willing Minds to be taught.

SECONDLY, Exerciſe yourſelves in the Truth of GOD. You muſt by continual Uſe, get your Senſes exerciſed to diſcern both Good and Evil; but eſpecially, be well acquainted with the Principles and Grounds of the *Catechiſm*: It is the Want of this, makes Men that they underſtand not what is preached. They that are not firſt well nouriſhed with Milk, will not be fit to receive ſtronger Meat. If the Foundation be not well laid, it is in vain to build.

THIRDLY, Walk according to Light, *Pſal.* cxi. 10. *A good Underſtanding have they, that do his Commandments.* Then, if thou wouldſt get a good Underſtanding, and know the Myſtery of Godlineſs, walk according to Knowledge, employ

that little Knowledge thou haſt, and there is a Promiſe to give thee more.

FOURTHLY, Be diligent in inſtructing and teaching thy Family: If thou art ſet over others, a little Knowledge will encreaſe greatly, by this Means. *Gen.* xviii. 17, 19. the LORD ſaid; *Shall I hide any Thing from* Abraham? *No:* And He gives this Reaſon; *I know him, that he will command his Children, and his Houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the Way of the* LORD. If you teach your Families, GOD will teach you.

THERE are a Sort of doltiſh Hearers, that will hear, and ſeem to be very attentive, from Year's End to Year's End, and be never a Whit the wiſer. The heavy Judgment of GOD is upon many of them; and in them is fulfilled the Prophecy of *Iſaiah*; *By Hearing ye ſhall hear, and ſhall not underſtand*; and that, Chap. xxvii. 11. *It is a People of no Underſtanding; therefore He that made them, ſhall not ſave them; and He that form'd them, ſhall ſhew them no Favour.*

4. YOU muſt hear the Word with Affection and Delight. It is ſaid of GOD's People in the Primitive Church, that they heard the Word gladly. *I rejoice at thy Word, as one that findeth great Spoils,* (ſaith *David*, *Pſ.* cxix. 162.) *David* had been a Soldier; and ye know, that they that have lain at the Siege of a City a long Time, and at laſt take it, will rejoice exceedingly in the Spoil of it; therefore he rejoices in the Word, as they that divide the Spoils. And truly, whereas common People complain of the Badneſs of their Memories; this would be a marvellous Help to their Memories; if they would hear with Delight; therefore *David* ſaith, *Pſal.* cxix. 16. *I will delight myſelf*

ſelf in thy Statutes, I will not forget thy Word. This Delight he means will ſtrengthen our Memories.

CONTRARY to this, are a great Number, that hear without any Delight; yea, account it a Wearineſs, *Mal.* i. 13. But the LORD hath threatened, that the Word ſhall never do us Good, unleſs we attend to it with Love and Delight, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 10, 11. *Becauſe they received not the Love of the Truth, that they might be ſaved; therefore* GOD *ſhall ſend them ſtrong Deluſions, to believe a Lie.* A fearful Threatening, much to be conſidered in theſe Days: For this is the Reaſon, that helliſh Deluſions have ſuch Entertainment; becauſe GOD in his juſt Judgment, gives up thoſe to ſuch ſtrong Deluſions, that love not the ſtrict Truth of the Word of GOD.

5. YOU muſt hear the Word, with Application of it to your own Hearts and Lives; apply every Truth to yourſelves, for your own Uſe and Comfort, and Terror and Inſtruction: As it is, *Job* v. laſt; *Hear this, and know it for thyſelf*; carry this Truth home to thine own Heart: And,

FIRST, There is no Truth of GOD taught out of his Word, but it concerns every one of GOD's People, and was intended for our Uſe; *Rom.* xv. 4. *Whatſoever is written, is written for our Learning.*

SECONDLY, There is no Truth can be taught, to do us good, unleſs we apply it: As no Plaiſter can do the Patient good, unleſs it be applied; no Meat is able to do us good, be it dreſſed never ſo curiouſly, unleſs it be eaten and digeſted. This Compariſon is applied by the Prophet to this Pur-

poſe, *Iſa.* lv. 2. *Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good.*

THUS much of the Duties required in Hearing. Now follow, in the third Place, thoſe Duties that are required *after* Hearing.

1. WE muſt be careful to remember and keep that which we have heard, *Prov.* iv. 4. *My Son, let thine Heart retain my Words:* And, Ver. 21. *Keep them in the Midſt of thine Heart.* A Man that hath a Jewel, will be careful to lock it up in the ſafeſt Cheſt he hath, leſt it ſhould be ſtolen away. This is the very Compariſon of the wiſe Man, *Prov.* vi. 20, 21. So *Mary*, (*Luke* ii. 51.) *kept all the Sayings in her Heart:* And *David*, *Pſal.* cxix. 11. hid the Commandments in his Heart; and he gives the Reaſon, That he *might not ſin againſt the* LORD. And the Truth is, that as Meat that is eaten, if it remains not in the Stomach, will never do us good: So the beſt ſpiritual Food that can be, except it be retained by us, will not profit us: *Luke* viii. 15. *The good Ground are they, which with an honeſt and good Heart having heard the Word, keep it.*

MANY there are, that are very careleſs of this Duty: They think they have diſcharged themſelves abundantly, if they hear the whole Sermon attentively; as tho' there were Nothing more required at their Hands: Like our Saviour's Hearers, *Matt.* xxii. 22. *When they heard Him, they marvelled, and left him and went their Way:* But we never hear more of them. So many hear with open Ears; but, it goes in at one Ear, and out at the other. Others hear, and the Word ſmites them a little on their Conſciences, and one would think, ſome good Thing would be wrought; but they go away, and the Mo-

Motion dies. They are as Men that are sea-sick, whilst the Word humbles them, and makes their Consciences sick; but they are whole, when they are once landed at the Church-Door.

WELL then, let us in the Fear of GOD, hearken diligently to the Words of the *Holy Ghost*, *Heb.* ii. 1. That *we ought to give the more earnest Heed to the Things that we have heard, lest at any Time we should let them slip.*

2. WE must seriously think of that we have heard; that is more than Remembring. There is a great Deal of Difference betwixt the Possessing of Goods, and the Employing them for our Benefit; betwixt the Laying up of Garments in our Wardrobes, and the Wearing them to keep us warm: This Latter is done by Meditation, *Prov.* vi. 22, 23. *My Son, bind the Commandments continually upon thy Heart, and tie them about thy Neck:* It is a Phrase of Speech borrowed from Garments that are bound about the Body; for Meditation binds the Word close to the Heart. It is said of *Mary*, *Luke* ii. 19. that *she ponder'd* the Words of the Angel *in her Heart*. And it was *Paul*'s Advice to *Timothy*, 1 *Tim.* iv. 15. *Meditate upon these Things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy Profiting may appear to all.*

Now, if this be required after Hearing; how is it possible that they should profit by the Word, that scarce ever think of it afterwards? It is noted of the Disciples, that tho' they had seen *Christ*'s mighty Power in the Miracle of the *Loaves*; yet because they considered not the Miracle, their Hearts were harden'd: Because they did not meditate upon it, they were never the better for it.

And thus it uſually ſpeeds with thoſe that are careleſs in performing of this Duty.

3. WE muſt confer of that we have heard, and repeat it amongſt ourſelves, and examine the Scriptures about the Truth of what is delivered. I join them all together; for ſo they may well be, in the Practice of them.

4. WE are to put in Practice whatſoever we hear, 'till our Hearts and Lives are quite changed by it, *Jam.* i. 22. *Be ye Doers of the Word, and not Hearers only, deceiving your own Souls.* Obedience is the End of Hearing, *Deut.* v. 1. *Hear, O* Iſrael, *the Statutes which I ſpeak in your Ears this Day, that ye may learn them, and keep them, and do them.* Yea, Obedience to the Word muſt be ſpeedy, without any Delays, as it is ſaid of the *Coloſſians, Col.* i. 6. that the Goſpel brought forth Fruit in them, from the very Day they heard it, and knew the Grace of GOD in Truth. And the Prophet *David* reſolved, *Pſal.* cxix. 60. *I made Haſte, and prolonged not the Time to keep thy Commandments.* And this is a ſingular Frame of Heart; becauſe the Putting the Word in Practice immediately, is a great Advantage to the Hearer: For then the Affections of the Heart are quick and lively; which with Delays die and decay.

BUT alas! How Few practiſe any Thing they hear; leave any Sin, or do any Duty! and therefore muſt needs prove like the *Houſe built on the Sand*; when the Time of Trial ſhall come, they muſt needs fall. Again, there are many, that in Hearing, have good Motions and Purpoſes; but they are like the Sluggard, that ſaid, *Yet a little Slumber*;

Slumber; *yet a little Sleep*; ſo, becauſe they delay, they vaniſh and come to Nothing: Of whom, in Reſpect of their ſpiritual Poverty, that may be ſaid which *Solomon* ſpeaks; *His Poverty ſhall come as one that travelleth*, and *his Want as an armed Man.*

A TREA-

A

TREATISE

ON

SELF-EXAMINATION.

1 COR. xi. 28.

Let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.

THE Examination which prepareth a Man to receive the Sacrament of the LORD's Supper worthily, is an holy Work of the Soul, whereby it casteth its Eye upon itself, and so looks through itself; makes an exact Survey and Search into every Corner, and takes a true Estimate of its spiritual State.

IN

IN this Exercise, a Man, by the Touch-stone of GOD's Word, which is as pure as the Silver tried in a Furnace, doth try whether his Conversion be sound and saving: And whether he have, 1. Knowledge. 2. Faith. 3. Repentance. 4. New-Obedience. And, 5. Love.

HE must also revise these Graces, and consider how they wax or wain, fade or flourish, languish or are in Life, that so he may proportionably prepare and apply spiritual Preservatives or Restoratives. But especially that he may so address them towards this holy and heavenly Banquet, that every one of them may receive Addition and Vigour thereby.

AND in this Glass of Examination, he discovers what Spots and Stains have light upon his Soul; what Wounds or Breaches have been made upon his Conscience; what Infirmities or Frailties, what Omissions or Relapses, or new Falls, have grown upon him since his last Receiving. Upon which Discovery, he presently pours out his Soul before the Throne of Grace, with Groans and Sighs, for Reconciliation with GOD, for Restitution to his Favour and Protection, for his former Peace and Comfort of Conscience; he renews his Faith and Repentance for them; (for every new Sin requires a new Act both of Faith and Repentance:) And so prepares his truly humbled Soul to receive the Assurance of the Remission of Sins, sealed unto him by the Blood of *Christ* in the Sacrament.

I. FIRST, For Conversion. Conversion is that holy and happy Change wrought upon us, by the effectual Concurrence of the outward Ministry of the Word, and inward Working of the Spirit; whereby, of natural, carnal and prophane Men, we

we are made ſpiritual, holy and new Creatures; and from the Dominion of Sin and Satan, are tranſlated into the Kingdom of Grace, and into the Light and Liberty of GOD's Children.

Now a Man may, by ſuch Marks as theſe, try whether he be truly converted or no:

1. IF he hath turned from *Satan* in all Sins, and turned unto GOD in all Duties. If he hath left all groſs Sins, in Practice and Action; and all Frailties and Infirmities, at leaſt in Allowance and Affection, ſo that with watchful Reſiſtance, and earneſt Groanings of Spirit, he ſtrive and pray againſt them, and be humbled and kept in Awe by them; and that he perform Obedience to all GOD's Commandments, though not in Perfection of Degree, yet in Sincerity of Heart.

2. IF he be willing in all his Purpoſes, Deſires, Endeavours and Actions, to ſet himſelf in the Preſence of GOD, and to be wholly, unreſervedly and entirely guided by his Word.

3. IF he can without ſervile Trembling, or prophane Senſeleſſneſs; yea, with an holy Comfort and humble Triumph think upon Death, Judgment, Hell, and thoſe endleſs Torments.

4. IF he lovingly hunger and thirſt after ſpiritual Nouriſhment and Growth in Grace by the Word, Sacraments, and Chriſtian Conference; by ſanctifying the Sabbath, and all other godly Exerciſes, both publick and private.

5. IF he heartily long after the Coming of *Chriſt*, and love ſuch as are true Chriſtians; and that becauſe they ſerve GOD with Singleneſs of Heart.

Heart. And if thou desirest that thy Love of the Brethren, should be unto thee an infallible Mark of spiritual Life: 1. Let the principal Object of thy Love be, his Christianity; not Gain, Pleasure, moral or natural Parts; 2. Love of all the Saints. He that loves not all, loves none aright. (Yet this takes not away Degrees of Love.) And, 3. Love them at all Times; in Adversity, Disgrace, Temptation and Sickness.

6. If his chief Delight and best Comfort be in holy Duties and heavenly Things, and that he infinitely prefer them before Gold, Honours, Pleasures, yea, the whole World.

7. If he be truly humbled with Consideration of the long Time of his Impenitency, and very sorry he begun no sooner, nor made greater Haste into the glorious State of Christianity.

8. If those prophane Companions, Pleasures and Vanities be most distasteful unto him, which formerly he pursued with Greediness and Delight.

9. If to the Power of his Gifts at all Occasions, he be still plotting, working, and labouring for the Conversion of others with Zeal and Sincerity; especially those that are neareſt him, or any Way depend upon him.

Thus are we to examine, whether a Conversion be wrought in us, and whether it be true, sound and saving or no. Now the inseparable Companions of a sound Conversion; are, 1. Knowledge. 2. Faith. 3. Repentance. 4. New-Obedience. 5. Love.

THE firſt of theſe Graces is Knowledge; at leaſt of the fundamental and neceſſary Principles of the Chriſtian Faith; as, 1. Of GOD's Majeſty. 2. Our own Miſery. 3. The Means of Remedy. 4. The Nature, Uſe, and End of the Sacrament.

FIRST, of GOD's Majeſty we muſt conceive, as the Light of his pure and holy Word ſhall guide and inform us: And hereby we are taught,

THAT He is one, infinite, inviſible, and indiviſible Eſſence, and three truly diſtinct Perſons: the Father begetting, the Son begotten, the Holy Ghoſt proceeding from the Father and the Son.

THAT he is the omnipotent Creator and Conſerver of the whole World, and all Things therein; the Searcher and Seer of all Hearts and Secrets; moſt Holy, moſt Merciful, moſt Juſt, Almighty, Everlaſting, without Beginning or End; preſent in all Places; the ſpecial Protector and Portion of his Children. Knowledge of this Point may teach us; 1. Reverence and Awfulneſs to ſo dreadful a Majeſty. 2. Adoration and Admiration of ſo infinite Excellency. 3. Love of ſo great and immeaſurable Goodneſs. 4. Secure Reliance upon his almighty Power.

SECONDLY, we muſt have a clear Sight and Knowledge, a right Senſe and Feeling of our moſt miſerable, ſinful and accurſed Eſtate by Nature.

EVERY Man and Woman, by Nature, is a very Stranger and Enemy to GOD, the Child of Wrath, Heir of everlaſting Perdition, enwrapped and incorporated into the accurſed Communion with the Devil and unclean Spirits, *Coloſſ.* i. 21.

EVERY

EVERY one naturally hath his Understanding full of Blindness, Sinfulness, Vanity, Pride, Folly, and many such like Distempers. His Will full of Wilfulness, Frowardness, Rebellion, and Nonconformity to the holy Will of GOD. His Affections full of Wildness, Fury and Confusion. His Thoughts full of Earthliness, Filthiness, and Sensuality. His Memory stored with polluted Notions, and the Relicks of foul Abominations. His Heart full of Deadness, Deceitfulness, and iron Sinews. His Conscience full of Bitings and Stingings, defiled and uncomfortable. And besides, every Member of the Body is enslaved to Sin and *Satan*. Thus every one naturally lives the Life of Hell in all the Powers of his Soul, and Parts of his Body. And he hath a Fountain of original Sin sticking fast in his Bowels, which still feeds and fills his Body of Death, or rather Life of Sin, with continual Supply of new Poison, and hellish Vigour.

OUT of this Mass of spiritual Misery spring naturally all Plagues, Judgments, and Curses, both in Soul and Body, both in this Life, in Death, and in the other World.

IN this Life hereby we are subject to Terrors, and strange Astonishments in Mind: To all Infirmities, Diseases, and Tortures in Body: To Loss, Wrongs, and Oppression in Goods, and our temporal Estate: To Slanders, Disgraces, and Reproaches in our good Name: To Discontent and Discomfort in Wives, Neighbours, Friends, Children and Posterity. In Death they are to have their poor and helpless Souls torn with much Anguish, and painful Horror, from their Sinful Bodies, with a comfortless or senseless Divorce. They are upon their Death Beds to lie like wild Bulls in a Net, as *Isaiah* speaks, full of the Wrath of the LORD.

But in the World to come is the Heighth of all Woe: Not only an eternal Separation from the Preſence of GOD, and the Fruition of thoſe glorious and unutterable Joys, but alſo endleſs Vexation and Torment with the Devil and his Angels: With infinite Horror and Anguiſh ariſing from the full Feeling of the whole and unquenchable Wrath of GOD, which like a bottomleſs Sea, will ſwallow up the Bodies and Souls of all impenitent Sinners.

BESIDES this Knowledge of Man's Miſery, and natural Corruption in general, we muſt take Notice of thoſe ſpecial, particular Sins, which have found Harbour in our Souls; and ſeriouſly and ſenſibly conſider the intolerable Curſe of GOD due unto us for the ſame.

LASTLY, we muſt know how this great Maſs of miſerable Mankind was plunged into this accurſed State of Damnation and Death. *Adam* and *Eve*, our firſt Parents, created in the Beginning of the World, planted in *Paradiſe* by the Hand of GOD, and placed in full Poſſeſſion of all Holineſs, and true Happineſs, did by the Tranſgreſſion of GOD's Commandment about the forbidden Fruit, diveſt all their Poſterity of that glorious Eſtate, and caſt us all into the Gulph of Sin, and Guiltineſs of Damnation. He being the Father of all Men, and Fountain of all Generations following, did ſuſtain the publick Perſon of Mankind, both in his Innocence, and alſo in his Miſery; in his Felicity, and in his Fall.

KNOWLEDGE of this Point ſhould beget in us; 1. A Senſe of our Miſery. 2. Humility. 3. Heavyheartedneſs for our ſinful and accurſed State. 4. Reſtleſs Groans and Longings for Relief and Recovery.

IN

IN the third Place we muſt be acquainted with the Means of Remedy and Recovery, out of that ſinful and accurſed State, wherein we lie by Nature.

IN this Point we muſt know who is able to redeem us from Sin, *Satan*, Hell and everlaſting Death; and by his Merits and Mediation, to reſtore us to Righteouſneſs, GOD's Favour, a good Conſcience, and a far more glorious Happineſs than we loſt in *Adam*. And alſo the Way and Means to purchaſe Intereſt in this bleſſed Redeemer and to partake of thoſe Bleſſings which belong to eternal Life.

FOR the former Point, our Redemption and Recovery from our Sinfulneſs and Curſedneſs, depends wholly upon the ſecond Perſon in the Trinity, *Chriſt Jeſus* the only Son of GOD; who was Man that He might be ſubject to the Law, fulfil it, and bear the Puniſhment of our Tranſgreſſions of it: And GOD, that He might make the Obedience of his Life, and Miſeries at his Death, meritorious for our Salvation: Who was Man, that He might ſuffer, die, and ſhed his Blood; and GOD, that He might break open the Bars of the Earth, and conquer Death, and riſe again. For had he been GOD alone, Satisfaction could not have been made to Divine Juſtice, which muſt be performed in the ſame Nature which offended: And if he had been only Man, he could not have applied unto us the Power of his Paſſion, or made his Sufferings effectual for us.

As to the Office of our Redeemer; he is called *Chriſt*, that is, GOD's Anointed, becauſe the Father did conſecrate him to the Office of a Mediator, and

did furniſh him with all Gifts meet for that Purpoſe.

THERE are three Parts of his Mediatorſhip: 1. The Prophetical Part, whereby he revealeth and publiſheth the whole Will and Counſel of GOD, his Father, concerning Man's Salvation. 2. His Prieſtly Function, whereby he works our full, and compleat Redemption; in his holy Conception, righteous Life, and bloody Suffering upon the Croſs: And laſtly, his Royal and Kingly Part, whereby he mightily effects all this in us, by the inward Operation of his Spirit; powerfully applies it unto us, and ruleth his Church 'till the laſt Judgment.

THOSE Benefits, which ſpring up unto us out of this bottomleſs Fountain of Grace; are infinite, unſpeakable, and glorious; every one of them worth a World of Gold; yea, ten thouſand Worlds. To mention a few; they are theſe: 1. Participation and Union with *Chriſt*, whereby we are engrafted into Him, and become one with Him. 2. Reconciliation, whereby we are delivered from the Wrath of GOD, the Enmity of the Creatures, and Slavery to *Satan*, and happily reſtored unto GOD's Favour and Protection. 3. Remiſſion of Sins, whereby our polluted Souls are waſhed and diſcharged from the Stain, Guilt, Puniſhment, and Reign of Sin, by the Sufferings and Sovereignty of our bleſſed Saviour.

FURTHERMORE it is required, that we be acquainted with the Means, how we may gain an Intereſt in this our bleſſed Redeemer; eſpecially ſince the greateſt Part of the World, and even thoſe that live in the Profeſſion of true Religion, receive no Benefit by Him.

THE

THE Spirit of the LORD *Jesus*, by his infinite Power, doth knit us with a real Conjunction unto *Christ*, by Means of a true Faith, whereby we are endued with spiritual Life, and all the Blessings of Heaven. GOD the Father is as it were the Fountain of this Life; *Christ* is the Conduit; the Word, the Pipe; Faith the Hand that opens it; the believing Heart the Cistern which receives this Water of Life, wherein it is a Well of Water springing up into Everlasting Life, *Joh.* iv. 14. And the Holy Spirit of GOD by the Power of the Word preached, creates in our Hearts this Faith, which is an holy Gift of GOD, whereby the Soul is enabled to apprehend and apply *Christ* particularly, as he is set forth and offered in the Word and Sacraments.

THIS justifying Faith ever brings forth a zealous and unfeigned Love to GOD, his Service, People, Word and Sacraments; and an universal and sincere Repentance and Amendment of Life, and a Longing to die, in Hope of a better Life.

THUS far of the Knowledge of GOD's Majesty, our own Misery, and the Means of Recovery. In the fourth Place, we must be acquainted with the Nature, Use and End of the Sacraments.

THE two Sacraments, (the first, *Baptism*; of Incorporation and Ingrafting into *Christ*, whereby we are enrolled into the Number of the Houshold of GOD, and of the Citizens of the heavenly *Jerusalem*: The other, the LORD's *Supper*; of our further Growing into *Christ*, and stronger Confirmation of the Covenant of Salvation, and Grace towards us, whereby our spiritual Life is revived, quickned, and increased in us:) are Signs

to represent, Seals to confirm, and Instruments to convey *Christ*, with all the Benefits of his Passion and Blessings of Heaven unto every believing Christian; and serve as Bonds of Obedience unto GOD, strict Obligations to the mutual Exercise of Christian Charity, Provocations to Godliness, Preservations from Sin, Memorials of the principal Benefits of *Christ*.

THIS latter, the LORD's Supper, is the second Sacrament of the Gospel, wherein, by a sacramental Use of Bread and Wine, those that are already ingrafted into *Christ*, are nourished, and grow in spiritual Life, and in the State of Grace.

THE Signs and outward Matter of this Sacrament, are, Bread and Wine: The Things signified, are *Christ*'s Body crucified, and his Blood pour'd out.

THE principal End of this Sacrament, is, the Remembrance of the Death of *Christ*, which He commanded unto us at his last Parting from us; and therefore that ought to stick fast in our Minds, and to renew continually in our Hearts, fresh Motions of Tenderness. For the last Words of a dying Friend beget and stir up deep Impressions, and dear Affections in loving and tender Hearts. If we read of his Death and Passion, that will stir and strike our Hearts with some Feeling and Sympathy. If we have it powerfully preached, it will affect us more sensibly. If we lay it yet nearer to our Hearts and let it immediately work upon our Minds by Meditation, it will yet more forcibly prevail upon our Affections. But to have, as it were represented before our Eyes, a visible Crucifying of *Christ*, the Bruising of his Body, and Shedding of his Blood, doth far above all, breed most

tender

tender Melting and Bleeding, in a Soul ſenſible of Sin, the true Cauſe of all theſe Sufferings.

THIS laſt Repreſentation, Divine Wiſdom made Choice of as the ſtrongeſt Means to continue and keep freſh the Remembrance of his Death.

GOD the Father, after that great Deluge and fearful Drowning of the whole World, left the Rainbow as a Remembrance to Mankind of their Salvation and Deliverance from Water. And when He had ſupernaturally fed his People with Manna from Heaven, He commanded a Pot full of it to be preſerved in the Ark as a Memorial of ſo great Mercy. We being freed from the devouring Flood of Sin by the Blood of *Chriſt*, are put in Mind thereof by Baptiſm. And being nouriſhed with the heavenly Manna of *Chriſt*'s Body, have this high and holy Myſtery of the LORD's Supper left unto us, to continue the Remembrance of his Death and Paſſion.

BY our Participation in the Grace and Efficacy of his Body and Blood, we grow into a nearer and ſtronger Union with *Chriſt*, and partake myſtically, yet truly of a more inward Fellowſhip with the Perſon of *Jeſus Chriſt*, as well in that He is Man as GOD.

BESIDES the Strengthening and Knitting faſter our bleſſed Union with *Chriſt*, this holy Sacrament is a powerful Means to maintain and increaſe an holy Communion of everlaſting Love amongſt the Saints, the true and living Members of *Chriſt*'s Body. Hereby we lay ſurer Hold by the Hand of Faith upon the Merits and Sufferings of *Chriſt*, we feel more ſenſibly the Power and Virtue of his Paſſion, and are more fully and feelingly aſcertained of

the

the Favour of GOD, and the Forgiveneſs of our Sins.

MOREOVER, at this holy Banquet, our Conſciences diſquieted with ſome Infirmities, or Relapſes, ſince our laſt Receiving, (a Renovation of our Repentance and Faith preceding) are ſweetly appeaſed by the Blood of the Lamb; our inward Peace and ſpiritual Joy is increaſed; we gather Ground againſt our Corruptions, and the Power of Sin, and become more chearful, ſincere, and univerſal in our Obedience.

KNOWLEDGE of this Point ſhould ſtir us up, 1. With Reverence and Thirſting, to come unto this high and holy Myſtery, where ſo many glorious Bleſſings are offered, and to be enjoyed; and 2. Ever to be Gueſts at this holy Banquet, when, or how often ſoever it ſhall be prepared for us.

THUS far have I paſſed through the four Points. 1. Of the Majeſty of GOD. 2. Our own Miſery. 3. The Means of Remedy and Recovery. 4. The Nature, Uſe and End of the Sacrament: A right Knowledge of the Subſtance of which, is neceſſarily required of whomſoever comes to the LORD's Table.

I WILL end all about this firſt Grace of Knowledge with ſome Marks of a ſaving Knowledge, that a Man may be able to try the State of his Soul in this Point. For though Knowledge be the Ground-work of all ſpiritual Building, and neceſſary to Salvation; yet if it be not ſanctified to a Man, it ſerves but to encreaſe his Condemnation. And you may know it to be Saving by theſe Marks: A glorious Lamp of ſaving Light, and quickning Power of ſpiritual Life, is planted in every Man's

Heart

Heart that profits by the Miniſtry of the Word, and in the Myſtery of the Goſpel.

FIRST, it may be preſumed to be ſaving Knowledge if it beget Humility and Lowlineſs of Mind; for the more the true Chriſtian knows in the Word of truth, and the deeper he wades in thoſe heavenly Myſteries, the more clearly he ſees his own Blindneſs, Vanity, inward Filthineſs and natural Corruption. As the more Light is let into a filthy Houſe, the more the Foulneſs of it is diſcovered; ſo the further he grows into divine Knowledge, he knows better his own Miſery; GOD's dreadful Majeſty and juſt Vengeance againſt Sin; more largely and fully how many Ways he offends againſt ſo merciful a Father; how far ſhort he comes in holy Duties, and in Obedience to his pure and undefiled Law. All which, where there is Grace, are Matters of Humiliation and of Taking down our proud Hearts. In human Knowledge of Nature and Philoſophy, the deeper Skill and the profounder Learning, if there be an Addition of Modeſty, the lower and humbler is a Man's Opinion of himſelf. The Reaſon is, the more he knows, the more Doubts, Difficulties, Scruples and Perplexities ariſe in his Mind, which make him more fearful in his Profeſſion, and to think that he comes far ſhort of that he ſhould be, tho' he go far before thoſe that think themſelves already excellent. It is ſo in divine Knowledge of ſupernatural Principles, and heavenly Myſteries, where there is Grace annext. The further we look into the Book of GOD, and the higher Scholars in *Chriſt*'s School, the more lowly-minded, and the more humbly conceited we are of our ſelves. The Reaſon is, the ſtronger and clearer ſighted we are to look into the Chryſtal of GOD's Book, the more Spots and Stains we ſee in our Souls, more Purity in his Majeſty, more Miſery in our own Nature;

Nature; and therefore by the Power of Grace, being ſorrowful for the Pollutions of our Souls, fearful of his Majeſty, and ſenſible of our own Miſery, we entertain a lowly Conceit of our ſelves. One certain Mark then of ſaving Knowledge ſhall be this; the more ſkilful in Scripture, the more humble in our own Conceit.

A SECOND Mark of ſaving Knowledge ſhall be this; if it be joined with Converſion of the Heart and Reformation of Life; for a ſound Change of the Heart and Life ever accompanies ſaving Knowledge. Knowledge without Obedience, is ſo far from being available to Salvation, that it haſteneth and doubles our Damnation. Small Reaſon have Men to be proud of their Knowledge without Practice; for though for a Time they make it ſerve their Turn for a Shew, yet at laſt it will end in Sorrow and Curſes; for they increaſe the Hardneſs of their Heart, the Guiltineſs of their Conſcience, and the Number of their Stripes and Damnation in Hell, according to the Meaſure of their fruitleſs Knowledge. There are many baſe and degenerate Ends of Knowledge, which prophane Men propoſe to themſelves; but the Chriſtian muſt make the End of his Knowledge, Practice of Holineſs in his own Life, and Inſtruction of Others in the Ways of GOD, if he would make it ſaving to himſelf. *Knowledge*, without theſe Ends *puffs up* our proud Nature with more Pride and Self-Conceit, but neither begets Life in Souls, nor ſound Hope of Immortality.

THIRDLY, it is edg'd with a longing Deſire, and inſatiable Thirſt after more. For the true Chriſtian, not reſting in hiſtorical, formal Knowledge, but diving into the myſtical Knowledge of the Myſteries of Salvation, which the Spirit of GOD doth

doth reveal to faithful Christians, doth there find and feed upon such heavenly Sweetness, such rich and glorious Comforts, that he is never well, but when he is digging deeper into this celestial Mine, and wading further into these holy Secrets. A holy Greediness after, and a continual Growth in Knowledge, is one special Mark then, that our Knowledge is saving. For it is an undoubted Character of all Graces, where they are in Soundness, there they are growing. If we have once tasted how sweet the LORD is, there will be a Desire to encrease more and more.

FOURTHLY, saving Knowledge is diffusive and communicative of itself. It is in the Soul of a Christian, as the Sun in his Sphere. The Sun doth not confine his Light within his own fair Body, but hurls it on every Side; he casts it upward, and so makes all the Heavens bright and beautiful about him: He throws his Beams downward upon the Earth, and there begets Herbs, Grass and Flowers, Fruit-Trees, and all the Beauty and Glory of the Earth: He pierces further, and with his Heat insinuates into the Bowels of the Earth, where there is any the least Passage, and there engenders all Manner of Metals, Gold, Silver and precious Stones: Yet further, he glides by the Side of the Earth with his unreflected Beams, and makes all those golden Spots, the Stars, in the opposite Part of the Sky: Nay, it is so greedy of doing Good, that it strikes through the Firmament into the transparent Parts, and seeks as it were to bestow its Brightness and Beauty beyond the Heavens, and never restrains the free Communion of his Influence and Glory, untill it determine by natural and necessary Expiration: So that he makes as much of his Light, and doth as much Good with it as may be. Even so the sacred Light of Divine Knowledge in the sanctified

fied Soul of a true Chriſtian, labours to enlighten thoſe that are round about him; to teach and inſtruct his Family, his Wife, his Servants, his Children, (if he have any of theſe) in the Ways of Godlineſs, and Doctrine of Salvation; deſires and delights to acquaint his Kindred, his Friends, his Acquaintance with thoſe comfortable Leſſons, which himſelf hath learned out of the Book of GOD: And even among Strangers he takes Occaſion to inſinuate heavenly Matters; that ſo his Knowledge may be fruitful, and working for his Maſter's Advantage in all Places, in all Companies; nay he is willing, that thoſe that oppoſe themſelves againſt Goodneſs, and GOD's Truth, may be reclaimed by his Admonition and Reproofs. And beſides all this, it is edged with an endleſs Deſire of doing Good ſtill. For it is a true Principle in Chriſtianity: *The Performances of* GOD's *Children are many, their Endeavours more, their Deſires endleſs.*

THUS ſaving Knowledge is ever ſpreading, moſt liberal and prodigal of itſelf, ſhining round about where it is, and working all the Good it can in all Places.

A SECOND Grace, touching which we ſhould examine ourſelves, is Faith: I mean true and juſtifying Faith, a ſpiritual Jewel of unvaluable Price, the very Life of our Souls, the Root and Foundation of all true Comfort, both in Life and Death, without which 'tis impoſſible that either our Receiving the Sacrament, our Offering up our Prayers, Alms-deeds, Hearing the Word, or any other Service, tho' in its own Nature, ever ſo good or neceſſary, ſhould either be acceptable unto GOD, or profitable to ourſelves.

THIS

THIS Saving Faith I thus define: It is a ſupernatural Gift of GOD, inſpired by the *Holy Ghoſt*, whereby the humble Soul, being enlighten'd with the Knowledge of the Doctrine of Salvation, and aſſenting thereunto, is enabled to lay Hold on the meritorious Righteouſneſs of *Chriſt*, and all the glorious Benefits of his Paſſion, as belonging particularly to itſelf.

THIS wonderful and holy Grace is wrought in the Heart, after this Manner:

FIRST, There is a Mollifying and Manuring of the Heart, that it may be as it were furrowed and fitted for this precious Seed of Life. And that thus:

1. BY the Miniſtry of the Word, there muſt Knowledge be planted in the Underſtanding both of the Law, (the powerful Application whereof begets Legal Repentance, a neceſſary Preparative to the Infuſion of Faith,) and of the Goſpel, a ſeaſonable Apprehenſion of the gracious Promiſes, which draws on Evangelical Repentance, whereof begins the Life of Faith. 2. The Heart muſt give full Aſſent, and be effectually perſuaded, that thoſe divine Principles were revealed for the Salvation of Mankind, and that they are moſt true, the very Secrets of Heaven, and divinely inſpired. This Aſſent and Perſuaſion, is called Hiſtorical Faith; or Faith of Knowledge. 3. The Law begins to work upon the Conſcience, and wound the Soul by a clear Diſcovery, and wide Opening of our many ulcerous Corruptions, all the Vanities of our Life, and particular Sins, and by affecting the Heart with a thorough Senſe and Feeling of the fierce Wrath of GOD, ready to break out in unquenchable Flames of Vengeance, againſt every Sin we have committed. 4. The Heart is ſtricken thro'

with Fear and Trembling; it is broken and bruiſed quite into Pieces with Terror and Remorſe; it is pregnant of Grief and Sorrow, and mournful beyond the Mourning of a Dove. For a Man, in this Caſe, feels himſelf to be a moſt hateful and accurſed Creature, enthralled to the Slavery and endleſs Confuſions of *Satan* and Hell, of Damnation and Death.

THUS far the Heart hath been in preparing for that Root of all Graces, that Plant of Heaven, an holy and ſaving Faith. In the ſecond Place, mark how it ſprings up in the mournful and humbled Heart.

THE Soul of a Man being thus bruiſed and broken, and rightly prepared with the Terrors of the Law, is now fitted to receive the precious Oil of the Promiſes of the Goſpel, and Comforts of ſaving Grace.

1. THE poor Soul being quite overwhelm'd with Waters of Anguiſh and Sorrow, and ſticking faſt in the deep Mire of Fears and Terrors, begins to look about for Comfort and Succour; none is to be found in any Creature, no Gold nor Silver, no Friends nor Phyſick will do him any Good; no Man or Angel, or any Creature can adminiſter any Relief. *No Man can deliver his Brother, nor make Agreement unto* GOD *for him, for it coſt more to redeem a Soul; he muſt let that alone forever.* At laſt it caſts its Eye upon that infinite Sea of GOD's Mercy, which glorioufly ſtreams through the bleeding Wounds of *Chriſt Jeſus*, upon every truly broken and contrite Heart; it faſtens its Sight upon our bleſſed Redeemer, as He is hanging upon the Croſs, ſtruggling with his Father's Wrath for our Sins, and Crying at laſt: *It is finiſhed.* It greedily catches

catches Hold on, and comprehends the whole gracious Doctrine of the Covenant of Life and Salvation. It considers all the Proclamations of Mercy and Pardon in the Book of GOD; as that in *Isa.* lv. 1. *Ho! every One that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters, and ye that have no Money, come, buy and eat: Come! I say, buy Wine and Milk without Money, and without Price.* And that out of *Christ*'s own Mouth, *Matt.* xi. 28. *Come unto Me, all ye that are Weary, and I will give you Rest.* 2. After a thorough Light and Consideration of the great Work of our Redemption, and of all the gracious Promises of Life, the distressed Soul begins to think, Tho' my Case be accursed, by Reason of Sin, yet, by the Mercies of GOD, it is recoverable; tho' my Sins be many and heinous, yet in *Christ Jesus* they are pardonable. Only it now casts about how it may have Part in these Mercies, and Interest in his Passion. 3. Hereupon it begins to hunger and thirst after the precious Blood of *Christ*, far more than ever the panting Hart after the Rivers of Water. It would give ten Thousand Worlds, ten Thousand Lives, for one Gush of his Blood, to wash away its Guilt; for one Drop of Mercy to quench its Thirst, and refresh its Agonies. 4. Hence it pours out strong Cries, and Prayers, and Supplications, Groans and Sighs unutterable, with such Importunity, that at last it casts itself upon GOD's tender Mercies in *Christ Jesus*; it throws itself with Confidence into the bleeding and blessed Bosom of its Redeemer, as He is hanging and holding down the Head upon the Cross; it hides itself sweetly and deeply in his sacred Wounds, and gored Side, from the Rage of *Satan*, and the Stingings of Conscience. And now by this Time the Bowels of GOD's tendrest Compassions begin to yearn within him. He who never knew how to break the bruised Reed, or

quench the ſmoaking Flax, takes the panting and weary Soul by the Hand; receives it into Mercy, Grace and Favour; takes off the Burthen of its Sins; knocks off the Bolts of Terror and Remorſe; bathes it in the ſovereign and ſaving Blood of his own dear Son, and accounts it pure and unſpotted for *Jeſus*'s Sake.

THUS Faith is brought forth. Now in the third Place behold it flouriſhing and growing in the Heart.

AFTER that ſaving Faith, with unexpreſſible Groans and Sighs, and ſtrong Cries, hath laid Hold on the bitter and victorious Paſſion of *Chriſt*, and ſo purchaſed Favour and Remiſſion of Sins; 1. It preſently returns this bleſſed Meſſage unto the Soul; that it is certainly pardoned, and entitled by the Covenant of Grace, freſhly ſealed with the Blood of *Chriſt*, unto a Crown of Immortality. This being done, it is filled with Joy unſpeakable, and with Peace that paſſeth all Underſtanding: But after it comes to itſelf out of theſe ſtrange Extaſies, it conſiders what great Things have been done for it, what extraordinary Love and infinite Mercy hath been ſhewn unto it: And thereupon, 2. preſently addreſſeth itſelf to evangelical Repentance; to bewail heartily all his Sins, and former wicked Life, not ſo much for Fear of GOD's Vengeance as he did in legal Repentance, but with godly Sorrow, for having ſo vilely and rebelliouſly grieved and offended ſo gracious a Father; and ſo doth reſolutely abandon the Practice of every Sin, and throw out of his Heart the Allowance of every the leaſt Infirmity: And 3. forever after ſettles himſelf to Holineſs of Life and Heart, a good Conſcience, and an univerſal Obedience to GOD's Commandments; by Growth in which, and by Experience of GOD's ſpecial Love unto Him in

the

the Courſe of his Chriſtian Life, and new Obedience, his Faith receives continual Life and Strength, until it come to that Heighth of Aſſurance, that he is able to ſay: *I will not fear tho' the Earth be moved, and tho' the Mountains be caſt into the Midſt of the Sea.* This noble Elevation of Spirit, is the natural Iſſue of a ſtrong Faith. Which if we would attain or preſerve, we muſt watchfully look unto our Hearts, Lives and Conſciences, that they be pure, unſpotted and tender; we muſt take Heed of Relapſes, and warily prevent Falls into Sin. For we ſhall find our Faith to ebb and flow, according as there is a Decay or Increaſe of Holineſs of Life and Heart.

THUS I have briefly opened to you the Nature, Birth and Growth of Faith: And the rather, leſt you deceive your own Hearts with falſe Faiths; I mean Faiths unſufficient to Salvation; of which there be many Kinds; as,

FIRST, There is an Hiſtorical Faith; whereby a Man is endued with Knowledge of the Word, and is certainly perſwaded in his Heart, that it is moſt true, and divinely inſpired: This is ſo far from being Saving Faith, that the Devil and his Angels excell many Men herein: For whereas many Men are quite Ignorant of the Word, and many have but little Knowledge, and give but weak Aſſent to the Truth thereof; the Devils know much, certainly believe it, and yet they do more, *they fear and tremble.*

SECONDLY, There is a Faith of Miracles; which is an inward Perſwaſion of the Heart, wrought by ſome ſpecial Inſtinct of the Holy Ghoſt, in ſome Men, whereby they are thro'ly perſwaded, that GOD will uſe them as Inſtruments

to bring to paſs ſome ſtrange and extraordinary Things. This hath no Power for Salvation. *Judas* was endued with this Power, as well as the reſt of the Apoſtles. And we ſee, *Matt.* vii. 22. Many Workers of Miracles ſhall be rejected at the laſt Day. *Many*, ſaith *Chriſt*, *will ſay unto me in that Day*; LORD, LORD, *have we not by thy Name propheſied? and by thy Name caſt out Devils? and by thy Name done many great Works? And then will I profeſs to them, I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work Iniquity.*

THIRDLY, There is an Imaginary Faith, which deceives and damns Thouſands: And that is a ſtrong and bold Perſwaſion, without all Truth, Ground, or Warrant, that *Chriſt* is their Saviour, that they have Part in his Paſſion, and ſhall undoubtedly be ſaved, when indeed there is no ſuch Matter: And therefore it is no true Perſwaſion, but a vain Preſumption, a ſtrong Deluſion. And this is threefold: 1. When Men and Women, living in Ignorance, without all Saving Knowledge, (upon ſuch Principles as theſe; that they mean well; that they do no Man Harm; that they pray Morning and Evening;) build a bold and blind Perſwaſion, that they have as good Right in *Chriſt*, as the Beſt of them all; whereas indeed they lie enthralled in the Chains of Damnation, and are mere Strangers to the Life of GOD, by Reaſon of the Ignorance which is in them. For Knowledge in the Word of GOD, is the Foundation of all ſpiritual Building; without it there can no true Faith be had, no Repentance, no new Obedience, no ſaving Graces at all in this Life, or Salvation in the World to come: 2. When Men entertain a ſtrong and bold Conceit, that *Chriſt* belongs to them with all his Benefits, and yet harbour a Liking and Allowance of ſome Sin; at leaſt a Purpoſe

to

to continue in one ſweet Sin or other, and will not be ſubdued by the Power of the Word, to a thorough Change of Heart, and Amendment of Life. Theſe Men think they are wiſer than all the Chriſtians, that ever were, which could never find ſo ſmooth a Way to Heaven: But they foully and fearfully deceive their poor Souls. The Faith of theſe Men is but imaginary; for it is ever the Property of true Faith, throughly to purge the Heart, and reform the Life; to expreſs itſelf in true Repentance, and ſincere Obedience: And, 3. When Men conceive a bold and ſtrong Perſwaſion that *Chriſt* is their Saviour, and yet ſet Light by the Miniſtry of the Word and Sacraments; embracing them only at their Leiſure and Pleaſure, ſo far as their worldly Commodities, and carnal Contentment will give them Leave; but not with hungry ſpiritual Appetites, and humble Submiſſion to the Power thereof. The Faith of theſe Men is but a vain Preſumption; for juſtifying Faith is ever conceived, cheriſhed and confirmed, by a religious, conſtant and powerful Uſe of the Word and Sacraments. The Seeds of a weak Faith, (if it be true and juſtifying) ſown in the Heart by the Holy Ghoſt, doth grow by little and little to a ſtrong Faith and full Aſſurance; but ever by a zealous and profitable Purſuit of the Means of Grace and Knowledge, Preaching, Reading, Prayer, Meditation, Conference, Uſe of the Sacraments, Singing of Pſalms, Conſcience and Faithfulneſs in our Calling, Mercifulneſs to the Poor. He that hath true Faith, will ever have both an Eye and Heart to theſe holy Means, theſe godly Exerciſes.

4. THERE is alſo a Dead Faith, which is to be found in many that make grew Shew of Forwardneſs in Chriſtianity: When Men have good Store

of

of Knowledge, follow the Word and Sacraments with Diligence, are able to diſcourſe with Underſtanding, on Points of Religion, have good Reſpect to the Commandments of the firſt Table: But in Dealings with their Brethren, they ſhame their Profeſſion, deny the Power of Chriſtianity, and plainly ſhew that their Faith is without Life; their ſecret and cloſe Conveyances for enriching themſelves and enlarging their Eſtates, do clearly diſcover the Deadneſs of their Faith, and Death of their Souls in Sin.

5. THERE is a Temporary Faith; whereby a Man may attain great and excellent Things; as Knowledge of the Myſtery of *Chriſt*; Apprehenſion of his Excellency; ſome worthy Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt; Rejoicing in the Goſpel; many powerful Effects of the World to come; ſome Kind of Repentance and Converſion; ſome good Affections to GOD's Glory and Miniſters; Reformation of many Sins; and outward Holineſs; and yet for all this, not be truly regenerate to a lively Hope in *Chriſt Jeſus*. But if ſo, what Need have we to ſearch our deceitful Hearts to the Bottom, and to examine thoroughly whether we be in the Faith; whether *Chriſt Jeſus* be in us or no? If Men endued with great Knowledge, ſome Grace of the Spirit, and outwardly reformed in their Lives, may yet have no Part in the firſt Reſurrection; where ſhall appear the Ignorant, the wilfully Prophane, the Rebellious to godly Courſes, and good Inſtructions? What ſhall become of the Swearer, the Drunkard, the unclean Perſon, the Scorner, the Uſurer, the Worldling? If the formal Profeſſor, the civil honeſt Man, cannot be ſaved, where ſhall the notorious Sinner appear? If many ſhall ſeek to enter into the Kingdom of GOD, *and ſhall not be able*, *Luke* xiii. 14. what ſhall become of thoſe that

run

run as fast from it as they can? that root in the Earth? that hunt after the World all their Life long? Many Thousands of poor Souls most fearfully deceive themselves in this Point, about the State of their Souls. How many do not with that Gladness hear, with that Reverence respect, with that Reformation of many Things follow, the Ministers of the Word, as *Herod* did *John Baptist?* How many have not half that Zeal for the LORD of Hosts, as *Jehu* had? How many never humbled themselves with Fasting, or mourned in Sackcloth for their Sins, as *Ahab* did? I say, how many have not gone half so far in these Points, and yet think all is well with them, and make no Doubt of Heaven?

THAT you may not deceive yourselves, Beloved in the LORD *Jesus*, I shall more particularly shew you wherein the Power of a Temporary Faith, though unsufficient to Salvation, may bring forth a fair Shew of Christianity, and how far a Man void of Saving Faith, may go in many Things, and yet at last, if he go no farther, be a Cast-away.

1. AS concerning the Word, he may hear it, understand it, assent to it, rejoice in it, practise some Duties commanded by it, and yet all the While, it is not the Savour of Life to him. 2. He may go far in Faith, believe the Truth and Power of the Word, believe the Promises, believe *Christ* died for Sinners, yea, and hope he is one of them that *Christ* died for; and yet have no Part in Him. 3. He may go far in Repentance: For he may confess his Sins, he may feel Pricks in his Conscience, have Sorrow in his Heart, and Tears in his Eyes for them; he may promise and purpose for a Time to amend, yea, and make Restitution and Satisfaction for Wrongs done; he may have great Pen-

Not as tho I had already attained

Penſiveneſs and Terror after ſome horrible Fact, for fear of Hell-Fire, as had *Judas*, *Cain*, *Ahab*, and ſuch like, and yet come ſhort of Salvation. 4. He may go far in outward Shew of an holy and upright Life; he may be a juſt Dealer; an ordinary Goer to Church; a good Pay-maſter; a Reliever of the Poor; a bountiful Houſe-keeper; and yet at laſt be turned into Hell.

WHY then beloved Brethren, it very nearly concerns every Man to enquire and try whether his Converſion be counterfeit or real; whether his Converſion be but formal, and fair in Shew only, or ſincere and truly Chriſtian. And never ſuffer his Eyes to ſleep, nor his Eye-lids to ſlumber; never to pleaſe himſelf in any Grace or Services; until comparing them with thoſe attainable by the Unbeliever, he find himſelf to go beyond them, and to aſcend to that Pitch, which no ſuch can poſſibly attain unto. Elſe our ſure Foundation will be to lay, when it is too late, when the Rain falleth, and the Floods come, and Winds blow.

BUT ſome Men will ſay within themſelves; "This is ſowre and uncomfortable Doctrine indeed. What! a Man go ſo far, and yet be a "Caſt-away! and yet be damn'd! GOD forbid. "Let us have Mercy, Comfort, and Salvation "preached unto us. Let us hear how *David*, and "other Saints of GOD, for all their Falls were reſtored to Mercy. Let us hear of the Thief's "Converſion upon the Croſs, and not ſuch terrible Doctrine as this."

I ANSWER: Nothing hath been deliver'd in this Point, but that which hath ſure Foundation out of the Word of Truth. It may, and ſhould be uncomfortable to ſuch as are drunk with Preſumption, Proſ-

Prosperity and Security; to those that are desirous to save their Souls, and yet are resolved to continue in Sin; to all formal Professors and half Christians. But it is far better for such to hear the Voice of Terror out of the Law of GOD now, than hereafter to be turned into Hell with that Voice of Vengeance: *Go ye cursed into everlasting Fire.* It is far better for them to hear of Damnation upon Earth, than to endure it everlastingly.

As for the true Christian, this makes his Heart dance within him; makes his happy Soul melt within him, and resolve into Praises and Thankfulness; when he finds himself, by the sanctifying Grace of GOD's Spirit, possest of those spiritual Graces of which no Unbeliever can possibly be Partaker; when he sees that true-hearted Sincerity is in his inward Parts; that impartial Hatred of all Sin; that careful Respect and universal Obedience to all GOD's Commandments, (which are infallible Marks and Characters which distinguish him from formal Christians.) For when he seriously considers how far an Unbeliever may go, what Graces and Perfections he may attain, and all to no Purpose; it makes him more zealous, careful and diligent to make his Election sure by Sincerity and Holiness; to go faster towards the Mark, for the Prize of the High-calling of GOD in *Christ Jesus*; to press on more eagerly to the straight Gate, and with greater Violence to lay Hold on the Kingdom of Heaven. My Doctrine then is such as it should be; since it is a cutting Corrosive to the Prophane, and a comfortable Cordial to the Christian.

MANY presume to sin with the Saints of GOD, but they never repent and rise again with them. The Falls of the Saints are mentioned in Scripture, not

not to encourage us with Confidence to ſin, but to make us walk warily, and work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling. Look upon *David*, crying in His ſtrong Agonies, and Anguiſh of Spirit, *Pſal.* xxxviii. his Sin was as Fire in his Bones: He had not a good Day for a long Time, but the Grief and Horror of his ſinful Pleaſures made him cry out: He bought his Sin full dear. As for the Example of the Thief; 1. The LORD knock'd but once at his Heart by one Sermon, and he repented, believed, and openly confeſs'd *Chriſt*; thou haſt heard many, and art yet hard-hearted, and unbelieving. 2. This is an extraordinary Example, and has no Parallell in Scripture. A King ſometimes pardoneth a Malefactor at the Place of Execution, wilt thou therefore preſume on the ſame? 3. It was a Miracle; with the Glory whereof our Saviour would honour the Ignominy of the Croſs. We may almoſt as well expect a ſecond Crucifying of *Chriſt*, as a ſecond ſuch Thief.

THUS far of Faith inſufficient to Salvation, with which Thouſands content and deceive themſelves. But beſides this, I muſt acquaint you with ſome By-paths about Faith, which except they be carefully avoided, will lead us into Miſery: And theſe are Three:

1. THE Firſt ſtands in Exceſs, and that is *Credulity*. Many tho' they be ſold unto Sin, and ſwim down the Current of the Times, yet would gladly be thought to have Faith in *Chriſt*. Though they were never humbled for their Sins, their Hearts never broken and bruiſed with Terrors of the Law, and Remorſe of Conſcience; though they never once groaned or ſighed under the Burden of their Corruptions, yet they peremptorily perſwade themſelves they ſhall be ſaved at laſt; and when all comes

to

to all, that GOD will be very loth to caſt away any of his Creatures, and to turn them into Hell. But except we be ſtark Atheiſts, or blaſphemous Miſcreants, to think that GOD is as Man, that He ſhould lie, we may aſſure ourſelves that *the Wicked ſhall be turned into Hell, and all the People that forget* GOD, *Pſal.* ix. 17. And how terribly the LORD will come againſt all thoſe, who go on in their Wickedneſs, *Iſaiah* tells us, Chap. lxvi. 15, 16. *Behold* (ſaith he) *the* LORD *will come with Fire, and his Chariots like a Whirlwind, that He may recompence his Anger with Wrath, and his Indignation with a Flame of Fire. For the* LORD *will judge with Fire and Sword all Fleſh, and the Slain of the* LORD *ſhall be many.*

LET no Man then with a groundleſs and too credulous Conceit, build too much upon the LORD's Mercies: For it is a Truth far more firm, than either the Pillars of the Earth, or Poles of Heaven; *That to every one that diſobeys the Truth, and obeys Unrighteouſneſs, there ſhall be Indignation and Wrath. Tribulation and Anguiſh ſhall be upon the Soul of every one that doth Evil.* Therefore, if any ſay; I will go on in my Sin, and yet not be damned; it is as if he ſhould ſay; I will drink Poiſon, and not be choaked; I will go into a Plague-houſe, and not be infected; I will caſt myſelf into the Bottom of the River, and not be drown'd.

2. ANOTHER By-path ſtands in Defect, and that is Infidelity: Upon this Rock Thouſands run daily, and daſh their Souls to Pieces. It is a ſecret Diſtruſt of GOD's Promiſes propounding Happineſs to Man, relying on the Mercy of GOD in *Chriſt*. This hath always reigned in many in the World, doth at this Day, and will do, as long as the World endureth. Every Worldling is in a great Meaſure

poſſeſt of this Unbelief: For were he thoroughly perſwaded of the Certainty of endleſs Pains, and everlaſting Joys, how were it poſſible, that for a little earthly Pelf, which he heaps together, with much Anxiety, keeps together with many Fears and Jealouſies, parts from (and perhaps he knows not to whom) with much Sorrow; I ſay, that for a little ſuch earthly Pelf, he ſhould ſell his immortal Soul to Damnation.

3. A THIRD By-path, is Deſpair. I know Deſpair is properly oppoſed to Hope and not to Faith: But I handle it here, becauſe when a Man is caſt down by the Terrors of the Law; if he miſs of the right Path that leads to the rich Mercies of GOD in *Chriſt Jeſus*, he may fall into the Gulph of Deſpair. Now Preſumption, tho' it be a contrary Courſe toward Damnation, and quite Oppoſite to that which is by Deſpair; yet it is the direct Way to it. When Men, in the Day of their Viſitation, are called upon to leave their Sins, and yet will not entertain the Power of the Word into their Hearts and Affections, but go ſtill on preſuming upon GOD's Mercy; ſuch Men as theſe, when they have run their Race of Security, are readieſt to fall into Deſpair.

THAT GOD often leaves preſumptuous Sinners to fall thus, appears plainly in his Word; *Becauſe I have called, and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out mine Hand, and none would regard. Then ſhall they call upon Me, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall ſeek Me early, but they ſhall not find Me*, Prov. i. 24, 28. This Refuſing to be reformed in the Day of Grace, Abuſing GOD's Loving-kindneſs, Long-ſuffering and Forbearance, and Preſuming upon his Mercy againſt the Truth of his Word, and Glory of his Juſtice, make Way for utter Rejection and Deſpair

in

in the Day of Trouble and Heavineſs. As we deſire then to decline theſe woful Miſeries, and fear to fall into this Dungeon of Deſpair: Let us in the Name of GOD, in this acceptable Time of Repentance, turn unto the LORD, and to true Holineſs, from our Ignorance, Prophaneneſs, Worldlineſs, Coldneſs in Religion, and all other Sins. In this Day of our gracious Viſitation, let us ſubmit ourſelves with Humility and Obedience to the Power of the Word, and a fruitful Practice of the ſame.

BELOVED in the LORD *Jeſus*, this is your Day; this is your Seed-time. As you love your own Souls, ſuffer the immortal Seed of the Word to ſink into the Furrows of your Hearts, and bring forth Fruit. Now lay up heavenly and ſpiritual Treaſures; (you know not what Storms or Tempeſts may befal you hereafter;) and they will be ſure to hold out againſt the Deſolations of the whole World; againſt Wind and Weather, Want and Poverty; even againſt the Ruins of Heaven and Earth; they will never fail you, but laſt everlaſtingly. Take Heed of preſuming on GOD's Mercies: It is that wide and woful Snare by which *Satan* draws a great Part of Men into his Kingdom of Darkneſs. He that here makes GOD all Mercy, ſo to diſhonour him without Remorſe, all his Life long, ſhall moſt certainly hereafter find Him all Juſtice, ſo that he may glorify his Truth, in receiving the Wages of ſuch wilful Impiety.

BUT the chief Thing I would ſpecially adviſe and perſuade you to is, When it ſhall pleaſe the LORD by an effectual Application of the Law, to bring upon your Souls true Sorrow and Contrition, I would then have you to be very wary; for you ſhall then have two Ways offered; you

may either ſink under the Burden of your Sins, and deſpair; or lay faſt Hold upon the Son of GOD and be ſaved.

IN the Name of GOD take Heed: When ſpiritual Afflictions ſeize upon you, be ſure to take the right Way. Be not afraid, becauſe of the Word of Truth; to the truly humbled and broken Heart, *Chriſt Jeſus* opens his Arms far wider; the Bowels of GOD's Mercies roll together, to ſhew Compaſſion with far more Tenderneſs, than ever the deareſt Mother to her ſweeteſt Child. Oh! take Heed of that hateful Gulph of Deſpair! Do not ſo far gratify the Enemy of GOD and Man! Do not ſo much wrong thoſe yearning Bowels of GOD's tendereſt Compaſſions, which never broke any bruiſed Reed! Be not ſo cruel unto yourſelves, as to ſtop the bottomleſs and boundleſs Sea of GOD's Mercies from your own Souls! Oh! be not ſuch Lions and Tygers, as to tear and devour your poor Souls with irrecoverable Sorrows! Oh! never, never deſpair of GOD's Mercies! It is thought that *Judas* did more diſhonour GOD in deſpairing of his Mercies, than in betraying of his Son. Do not then ſo violate the ſure Promiſes of our gracious GOD, as to deny Mercy to *a bruiſed Spirit*; a Sacrifice far more pleaſing unto him, *than the Beaſts upon a thouſand Hills!* Do not, Oh! do not trample under Foot that unvaluable Blood, by thinking it inſufficient for your Salvation!

IT is a neceſſary Step towards Salvation, (as I have often told you) to be thrown down by the Power and Terrors of the Law, into Sorrow and Anguiſh of Heart, with a thorough Sight of your Sins, and Senſe of GOD's juſt Indignation againſt Sinners. But after you have been brought upon your Knees with the heavy Weight of your Sins,

Sins; after your Souls have melted into Tears of true Repentance; Oh! then take Heed of liſtening to the bloody Temptations of that roaring Lion, that is then moſt buſy to draw you to Deſpair! Do not by any Means wound the Wounds of your Soul with refuſing to be comforted! But preſently by the Hand of Faith, frame a Plaiſter of *Chriſt*'s precious Blood, and apply it cloſe to your broken Hearts. The wider Wounds, Sorrow for Sin hath made in your Souls, the more plentiful Streams of the ſoft and ſovereign Oil of the Comforts of the Goſpel, and Promiſes of Peace ſhall be ſure to cloſe up your Sores. GOD muſt deny Himſelf, which is impoſſible; He muſt diſrobe Himſelf of the brighteſt Beam of his Glory, which is his Mercy, before He can deny Pardon to the truly Penitent, or refuſe to give Eaſe to thoſe that are heavy laden with their Sins, and weary of the Burden. If it pleaſe the LORD once to touch your Conſciences with true Sorrow for your Sins, and to affect your Hearts with a perfect Hatred and Loathing of your former Vanities, be not diſmayed to approach the Throne of Mercy and Grace, for with the LORD is plentiful Redemption. Though your former Lives have been ſo rebellious, wretched and accurſed, that you are able to look back upon a Catalogue of Sins, as black as Hell, as red as Blood, as foul as *Sodom*, yet if now in this Time of Grace, you will faithfully turn unto the LORD, you ſhall find Eaſe unto your panting Hearts, and everlaſting Peace unto your troubled Souls.

WHY then, if there be any drooping or diſtreſſed Conſcience among you; if there be any Soul that is truly humbled with the Senſe of his Sins, let him ſhake himſelf from the Duſt, and defy Deſpair. Oh! how fair a Thing is Mercy in the Time of Trouble! It is like a Cloud of

Rain in the Time of Drought. If he will go on with the great Work of Regeneration, which the LORD hath happily begun in him; if he truly hate thoſe Sins that now ſo grieve his Heart; if he will faithfully forſake them, and amend his Life, my Soul for his, he ſhall be ſaved. And were the Sins of his former Vanity as great as the hugeſt Mountains; as many in Number as the Sands of the Sea-ſhore; *as red as Scarlet*; I dare aſſure him, they ſhall become *as white as the driven Snow*, and as though they had never been. Were his Soul all crimſon-red with the Blood of Men, as *Manaſſeh*'s was, with the Blood of Souls; with the Blood of Saints, as was *Paul*'s; with the Blood of the Son of GOD, as was the *Jews*; yet it ſhall be as fair as the brighteſt Sun-beam, and *as the Wings of a Dove, which are covered with Silver, and his Feathers are of yellow Gold.*

I AM perſwaded by this Time ſome Man's Heart doth dance for Joy, at the Diſcovery of this immeaſurable Bounty, and theſe rich and golden Mines of GOD's infinite Mercy, that hath no Part in them at all; whoſe Conceit that theſe Comforts belong unto him, is but like a poor Man's Dream of Gold. For I muſt tell you, that I dare not for my Life promiſe ſo much as one Drop of this mighty Sea of Mercy to any prophane Man, to any impenitent Perſon, to any that goes on in his Sins: I ſhould ſo ſtrengthen the Hands of the Wicked, juſtify the Unrighteous, and bleſs where GOD doth curſe. This Balm belongs only to broken Hearts: Theſe precious Oils are never vouchſafed but to wounded Spirits: Theſe Jewels are the Portions of thoſe only that fear the LORD, *and tremble at his Words*, *Iſa.* lxvi. 2. Let them in the Name of GOD take them and wear them, let them feed upon, and fill themſelves with theſe glorious Comforts,

ſorts, for they are theirs, and a Thouſand more; yea, all the Mercies of GOD, the unvaluable Price of *Chriſt*'s Bloodſhed, and all the Joys of Heaven.

THUS far of Faiths inſufficient for Salvation, and of By-paths about Faith. In the next Place, I come to propoſe ſome Marks of a true Faith; whereby I would have every Man to examine himſelf.

1. FIRST, We may know our Faith to be ſound and ſaving, if we find in ourſelves that Preparation of the Heart for the Infuſion of Faith, that Breeding and Springing of it in the Heart, and that bleſſed Birth thereof, which I have before laid down unto you.

BY the Miniſtry of the Word (for that is the ordinary Means of begetting the precious Grace of ſaving Faith; I ſay ordinary, becauſe ſometimes it pleaſeth GOD to work by other Means; as, by ſecret Motions and Inſpirations, by private Reading, Conference, Inſtruction, or Exhortation;) there is ever wrought firſt in the Soul, a Knowledge of that Sinfulneſs and Curſedneſs by Nature: Then upon a ſerious Conſideration of this Point, it is broken and bruiſed with true Remorſe, Terror and Compunction: After by Confeſſion of its wretched Pollutions, and Condemnation of itſelf: it is brought to an holy Deſpair, whereby it wholly renounceth itſelf as unworthy of Life, or Breath, or Being; nay, worthy of ten thouſand Damnations. Thus when it is at the loweſt, by the Mercies of GOD, it begins to lift up its Eye upon the gracious Promiſes of Salvation, revealed in the Goſpel, and ſhining moſt gloriouſly in the Face of *Chriſt Jeſus*. Then at Length out of the Darkneſs of deepeſt Diſcomfort, begin to ſhine ſome Glimpſes of Comfort;

fort; ſome little Hope of Pardon, Mercy and Recovery; becauſe it ſees, that the Sufferings of *Chriſt*, are ſufficient to heal all its Sores: Whence immediately ariſeth, a longing Thirſt after the Mercies of GOD, and Merits of *Chriſt Jeſus:* At laſt with Groans and Sighs unutterable, with Prayers and ſtrong Cries, it caſts itſelf upon thoſe yearning Bowels of Compaſſion, that are ever ready to bind up the broken Heart, and upon our bleſſed Redeemer ſuffering for our Sins.

BY ſuch Preparations, ſaving Faith is ſhed into the Soul. But other Faiths come eaſily; for they are either but mere Fancies; as the three Kinds of imaginary Faith, before ſpoken of; or elſe only floating in the Brain; as the hiſtorical and the dead Faith: Or lightly come, lightly gone; as temporary Faith; ſo that uſually they enter, and are entertained, without any ſenſible Change or great Alteration, either before their Coming, or afterward.

THUS in the firſt Place, we may try whether our Faith be true, by conſidering the Degrees and Steps by which it grows up in us. It comes not idly and eaſily, lightly and inſenſibly; but by the Power of the Miniſtry; by a Sight and Senſe of our Sins; by an Apprehenſion of GOD's Wrath due to us for the ſame; by much true Sorrow and Heavineſs of Heart, for having grieved and offended GOD by our former Vanities and Rebellions; by an hungring and thirſting after the Mercy and Grace of GOD in *Chriſt Jeſus*; far more lovingly, than for any worldly Good: Theſe are the Fore-runners of true Faith.

2. SECONDLY, Growth in Strength, and a daily Springing up towards Heighth of Aſſurance, is a ſound Mark of ſaving Faith. Other Faiths commonly ſtand at a Stay, or elſe flouriſh fair for awhile, but after

after decay and die; or elſe they grow only in a groundleſs Preſumption, not in a feeling Perſwaſion of GOD's Love and Favour, and of the certain Pardon of their Sins; but true and juſtifying Faith grows from a Grain unto a great Tree; from a Spark into a Flame, being blown by the Spirit of Grace, increaſed by the Waters iſſuing out of the Sanctuary, and cheriſhed with the Dew of Heaven. It is weak at the firſt, full of many Doubts and Fears; but after it hath been well exerciſed in the Means of Grace and Knowledge, by a zealous and fruitful Hearing of the Word; by Reading, Conference, Meditation, Prayer, Uſe of the Sacraments, Singing of Pſalms, Publick and Private Humiliations, Faithfulneſs in our Calling and Mercifulneſs to the Poor, it grows up to be a ſtrong Faith.

BUT by the Way I muſt tell you, that the moſt ſtrong and flouriſhing Faith, may ſometimes be ſorely weaken'd. Faith holds its Fulneſs of Aſſurance, while we preſerve the Fervency of our firſt Love, Sincerity in our Hearts, Innocency and Uprightneſs in our Lives. But if we grow cold in our Profeſſion, neglective of holy Duties, or relapſe into Sin, we ſhall find our Faith alſo to fail.

3. THIRDLY, It is peculiar to ſaving Faith, to purify the Heart. GOD purifieth our Hearts by Faith, *Acts* xv. 9. Other Faiths may purge the Underſtanding from Ignorance, the Tongue from Railing and Bitterneſs, the outward Actions from groſs and notorious Sins, but they all leave the Heart at large, to range and rove into a World of idle and earthly Thoughts, of prophane and fruitleſs Imaginations. Only ſaving Faith begets zealous and watchful Care over the Devices and Deſires of the Heart. Every true Believer ſets himſelf with ſpecial

cial Care, to bridle and ſubdue them to repreſs all wicked Stirrings of the Heart, and mainly to oppoſe all luſtful, proud, covetous, ambitious and malicious Thoughts; yea, and is ſometimes more vexed, for having given Way to ſome wicked Thought than for outward Frailties and Infirmities: For it grieves him to the Heart, that he ſhould be ſo tainted with that hateful Sin of Hypocriſy, as to the Eye of Men, to be unreprovable, and yet to grieve ſo good a Spirit, and offend ſo gracious a GOD, by the ſinful Wandrings of his Thoughts; which tho' no Man ſee, yet the Searcher of Hearts, doth hate and abhor. Let us then try the Truth of our Faith, by the Change of our Hearts. If our outward Affections, and inmoſt Thoughts be purified, it is a certain Sign the Power of ſaving Faith hath been there. By Nature *the Imaginations of Man's Heart are only evil continually*, Gen. vi. 5. *But the Deſire of the Righteous is only good*, ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. xi. 23. The main Streams of his Deſires, the Courſe and Current of his Heart is to Godlineſs and Goodneſs; tho' ſometimes his corrupt Nature, and *Satan's* boiſterous Temptations, may unawares carry his Thoughts another Way.

4. FOURTHLY, we may know our Faith to be ſound and ſaving, if it bring forth a true and thorough evangelical Repentance. Legal Repentance, moral Repentance, a hollow and half Repentance, Fear and Forbearance of ſome Sins for Fear of Puniſhment is not enough: But to bewail our Sins from the Bottom of our Hearts, becauſe they are Sins, and for Conſcience Sake to loath and hate all Iniquity, becauſe it is an Eye-Sore to our gracious GOD; to cruſh the Head of our original Corruption, and break the Heart of our ſweet Sin; to part from all groſs Sins in Action, and all Frailties and Infirmities, at leaſt with Diſaffection, Prayer,

and

and Humiliation: These are the Fruits of a true and justifying Faith. For no Man can truly, sincerely, and throughly detest and abandon all his former Courses, and his sweet Sin, before he be assured of GOD's marvellous Mercy towards him, in the Forgiveness of all his Sins in *Christ*. But when once the Spirit of Grace by a lively Faith hath certified our troubled and trembling Hearts of GOD's Favour in forgiving our Sins; when once we be assured, that that spotless and sacred Blood was spilt particularly for our Pollutions; then with truly wounded Spirits, and grieved Souls, do we begin to look on Him, whom our Sins have pierced; then do we hate our former Rebellions, which by the Eye of Faith we see, were the Whips and Nails, the Thorns and Spears that vex'd the Son of GOD. When once we soundly believe, that his precious Blood was shed for our Sins in particular, then do we shed those true Tears of Compunction which are the Soul's Heart's Blood, and Wine of Angels, right pleasing unto GOD, and joyful unto Heaven. Untill we have a true Perswasion settled in our Hearts, that we are redeemed by the Death of *Christ*, we cannot, for our Lives, truly hate all Sin, as it is Sin, and for the Love of GOD. But when we once have clasp't our Hand of Faith upon that glorious Crown in Heaven, which is sealed unto us by the Blood of *Christ*; then, and not before, are we content to use the World, as tho' we used it not; then the Sweetness of Sin is turned into Gall, and the Glory of the whole World appears to be but Dung, Vanity, and Nothing.

5. FIFTHLY, Saving Faith is the Root and Fountain of Sanctification; and therefore if we find ourselves to be sanctified, we may be assured that we savingly believe, 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. It is said, *Acts.* xxvi. 17, 18. that *Paul* was sent *to open the Eyes*

of

of Men, that they might turn from Darkneſs to Light and from the Power of Satan *unto* GOD, *that they might receive Forgiveneſs of Sins, and Inheritance among them which are ſanctified by Faith.* True and juſtifying Faith doth ever beget a Sanctification of all Parts, both in Soul and Body. By this holy Work of Sanctification, a Man ſhall find himſelf as far different from what he was before, as a Valley from a Mountain, the Strait from the Crooked, the Softneſs of Fleſh, from the Hardneſs of Flint, the Nature of Water, from the Subſtance of Diamond. For it makes a great Change in the Powers and Faculties both of Soul and Body, in all the Parts and Paſſages of Life. His Underſtanding is enlightned with Knowledge in the great Myſtery of Godlineſs, and in the Secrets of GOD's Kingdom, which are hid from the Wiſe, and Men of Underſtanding, and the greateſt Part of the World. His Will is now bent to the beſt Things: His Memory, which before was like a Sieve, and let out the Water of Life as it was poured in, is now a Store-Houſe for heavenly Treaſures. The Stream of his Affections is turned from the World towards GOD's Glory; from the Joys and Contentments of Sin, into a Hatred, Fear and Sorrow for them. His Heart is weaned from all its temporal Idols, and fallen in Love with eternal and heavenly Things. His Conſcience is purged, and become watchful to diſcover, and ſenſible to feel the Approach and Prickings of the leaſt Sin. His Hands are waſhed from all Manner of Sin. His Eyes are reſtrained from luſtful Wandrings, from beholding Vanity, from greedy Gazing upon the Wedge of Gold, and his Neighbour *Naboth*'s Vineyard. His Ears are ſtopt againſt Enticements to Sins, ſlanderous Tales, and filthy Talk. His Lips are ſilenced from Prophaneneſs, and from all evil Speaking and uſeleſs Diſcourſe. His Feet are fetter'd by the Power of Grace, from run-

running any more in the By-Paths of Vanity and Sin.

SUCH Prints as these we may find in our Souls and Bodies, if the Spirit of Grace hath sanctified them by saving Faith. Every Branch of Sanctification, is a Mark of the Sincerity of our Faith; as the Goodness of the Fruit, discovers the Soundness of the Tree. If saving Knowledge, Love to Christians, Fear of GOD's dreadful Majesty, Zeal for his Glory, Obedience to his Will, Respect unto all his Commandments, Reverence to his Ministers, Joy in his Promises, Humility under his Chastisements, a spiritual Hungering after the Sacrament, a sincere Longing for his Sabbaths, an earnest Wishing and Waiting for *Christ*'s Coming in the Clouds, and such other spiritual Graces dwell plentifully in us, and express themselves fruitfully in our Lives and Conversations; then assuredly the Root of Life, and Fountain of all other Graces, a lively Faith is seated in our Souls. But if these Fruits do not appear, our Faith is not a living Tree, planted by the Rivers of GOD's Blessings, but a dead Stock, only gilt and varnished over like the Shining of rotten Wood.

IF we would try then whether our Faith be true or no, there is no better Touchstone, than the several Branches of Sanctification. Let us run over some of them briefly, and, with Uprightness of Conscience, compare them with our present Disposition. 1. Do we sacrifice our whole Hearts, consecrate our Affections, devote our Thoughts, renting them resolutely from earthly Pleasures, and this vain World, to do unto GOD faithfully and sincerely, the best and utmost Service we can? 2. In Respect of glorifying GOD, *and keeping a good Conscience in all Things*; Do we scorn with an holy

Contempt, all prophane Scoffs and Cenſures, all Diſcountenance of Men? 3. Do we heartily grieve for and bewail our Sins paſt; not for any Fear of Puniſhment, but becauſe they have grieved our gracious GOD? 4. Do we loath and hate our preſent Corruptions? Eſpecially thoſe, which with ſenſual Sweetneſs, cleave faſteſt unto our corrupt Nature? 5. Do we impartially, with Zeal and Truth of Heart, ſet ourſelves to mortify and abandon every Sin; tho' our Reputation be never ſo deeply engaged, our Affection never ſo much endeared unto it? 6. Do we ſtill ſubmit ourſelves to the Will of GOD, as it is more and more reveal'd unto us by the Miniſtry of the Word; tho' it croſs our former Cuſtoms and worldly Deſires? And do we reſt contented with our preſent Eſtate, becauſe moſt certainly it falls unto our Lot by GOD's good Pleaſure, and everlaſting Providence? 7. Do we delight in Hearing, Meditating, and Conferring of GOD's Word? And do we ſtand to the Profeſſion and Practice of it? 8. Are we willing to reſign up our Souls into the Hands of GOD, and to meet our Saviour in the Clouds? If we find theſe Fruits of Sanctification in ourſelves, our Souls are ſeaſoned by a true and juſtifying Faith.

6. SIXTHLY, Saving Faith works by Love, *Gal.* v. 6. 2 *Pet.* i. 5. 1 *Tim.* i. 5. *A pure Heart, a good Conſcience, Faith unfeigned*, and true Chriſtian Love, ever go Hand in Hand. If we would be aſſured that our Faith is ſound, we muſt feel kindled in our Hearts, an holy Flame of moſt dear and ſpecial Love; firſt, towards GOD, who of his own free Mercy, hath ſealed unto us by the Blood of his Son, all the Prerogatives of the Saints upon Earth, and the bleſſed Inheritance of the moſt glorious and everlaſting Kingdom of Heaven. A

Senſe

Senſe of which Goodneſs, makes us prefer his Glory, before any worldly Good, or even Life itſelf.

FIRST, When we are certified by a lively Faith, of our Reconciliation with GOD, by the Death of *Chriſt Jeſus*, which is the Conduit, through which all Comforts and Graces do ſweetly flow unto us; we begin to love GOD for his Love and Goodneſs unto us, according to that, 1 *John* iv. 19. *We love* GOD, *becauſe He loved us firſt.* For certainly no Man can ſincerely love GOD, until he be perſuaded in his own Heart, that all his Sins are remitted: Then we begin to conſider with Meltings of Spirit, what an infinite Mercy of GOD it was, that we were not cut off before our Converſion, in the Time of our open Diſobedience and Rebellion. 2. But eſpecially conſidering that happy and holy Work of our new Creation, to the everlaſting Admiration of his Grace and Goodneſs, we muſe how by the mighty Power of his ſanctifying Spirit, He hath pulled us out of the Mouth of that devouring Dragon, *and ſnatched us as Brands out of the Fire*, to make us Stars in Heaven. What a marvellous Mercy is this! think we with ourſelves, that we ſhould be ſingled out by the Power of the Word, and mark'd by the Hand of GOD for Salvation, when many Hundreds about us periſh everlaſtingly! That ſuch as we, ſhould be waſhed, be ſanctified, be juſtified, *in the Name of the* LORD JESUS, *and by the Spirit of our* GOD! Should be like a Few clear-ſighted, amongſt a Throng of blind Men! Like *Gideon's Fleece, alone watered* with GOD's ſaving Bleſſings, *while the Reſt of the Earth is dry!* That, whereas ſound Chriſtians are very thinly ſcattered, *like the Berries, after the Shaking of an Olive-Tree, two or three in the Top of the utmoſt Boughs, and four or five in the high Branches*; here one or two in a Family, there

three or four in a Village; yet, by the Mercies of GOD, we are of their Number!

A SECOND Stair or Riſing of our Love, is to love Him for all thoſe Beauties and Excellencies; all that incomprehenſible Majeſty, Purity and Glory, which He infinitely and eternally poſſeſſeth in Himſelf; ſome Shadows of which, He hath diſperſed amongſt his Creatures. We are not to love GOD only for the Good we have received from Him, but alſo for his own Goodneſs, and for that great Majeſty, and unapproachable Light, which encompaſſeth Him in the Heavens. Hence it is, that ſuch an unquenchable Thirſt of ſanctifying GOD's Name, and the Advancement of his Kingdom, poſſeſſed the bleſſed Spirits of thoſe two Men of GOD, *Moſes* and *Paul*, that forgetting themſelves, they deſired *rather to be blotted out of the Book of Life, and to be accurſed*, than GOD ſhould not be glorified.

A THIRD Beam of this ſpiritual Flame, is when we ſo ſtrongly love GOD, that we love nothing in the World but for his Sake. 1. Hence it is, that true Chriſtians employ their Love unto their Children, rather in planting Grace in their Hearts, than in purchaſing for them large Poſſeſſions. 2. They love their Friends not for Pleaſure, Profit or Reputation; but becauſe they love GOD, and have his Image ſhining in them. 3. They love their Health, not becauſe they are enabled thereby with more Eaſe to purſue the World; but becauſe it brings Vigour unto their Bodies, and Liberty unto their Minds, to ſerve GOD more cheerfully. 4. They love Riches, Honours, Knowledge, the Countenance of Greatneſs, high Places, not that they may domineer in the World; but that they may perform more good Works, do more Good unto

good

good Men, and more Service to the Majesty of Heaven. 5. They love the Word, and the free Passage of it, not only because it brings outward Peace, and worldly Happiness; but because it glorifies GOD's Name, and enlargeth *Christ*'s Kingdom. Thus in a Man sanctified with saving Faith, the Love of all other Things is subordinate to GOD's Glory.

A FOURTH Step of our Love to GOD, is to hate ourselves for Love of Him; That is, to be content to loose our Goods, our Friends, our Liberty, and our Lives, rather than to betray his Truth and Glory. This divine Flame doth beget in the Heart of the true Christian, an holy Contempt of prophane Scoffs, Railings, Slanders and Disgraces; it makes the noblest Spirit digest with Patience the spiteful Baseness of the prophanest Abjects. This Love was hotter in the Hearts of many Martyrs, than the scorching Flames about their Bodies. Their Bodies were like ours, their Strength was not the Strength of Stones, their Limbs were not of Steel, nor Flesh of Brass, they were sensible of Pain as well as we; but the Heat of GOD's Love within them, did so wholly possess their Souls, that it more prevailed to comfort them, than the Flames to confound them.

AGAIN, Secondly, after that saving Faith hath planted this Love of GOD in our Hearts, it spreads itself to the Creatures, with due Respect, merciful Usage, and moderate Delight in them; as wherein appear some Prints and Shadows of the Beauty, Wisdom, Power and Glory of GOD: But especially to Men, because they are knit unto us with a nearer Bond of Brotherhood by Creation, and bear about them the Image of the same Creator: But most dearly of all to true Christians, because they are Fellow-members of *Christ*'s Body, and Co-

heirs with us of the ſame Kingdom. Hereupon it is that St. *Paul*, *Gal.* vi. 10. bids us *do Good unto all Men; but eſpecially to them of the Houſhold of Faith:* And that *David* tells us, *Pſal.* xvi. 3. *All my Delight is in the Holy Ones which are upon Earth, and chiefly in thoſe that excell in Virtue.* This Love of godly Men, is a manifeſt Mark of ſaving Faith, and which the Spirit of GOD hath pointed out as ſuch. We know, ſaith *John*, *That we are tranſlated from Death to Life, becauſe we love the Brethren*, 1 *Joh.* iii. 14. If any Man can heartily vouchſafe his beſt and kindeſt Affections to a true Chriſtian, for this Cauſe only, (he being otherwiſe a Stranger unto him,) that he ſees the ſaving Graces of GOD's Spirit ſhining in him: It is a good Argument that he himſelf is a true Chriſtian, and that thoſe ſame Graces are ſeated in his own Soul.

MOREOVER, Thirdly, a Man ſanctified by Faith, doth rightly love himſelf, but in another Meaſure, Kind and Manner, than prophane Men: For they make Idols of themſelves. Their Love to GOD, to his Word, to their Kindred and Neighbours, muſt ever yield to the Love of themſelves. They cannot love heartily a true Chriſtian, only for his Godlineſs. It may be, they may affect him for his Gifts, becauſe he deals juſtly with them, becauſe of ſome Bond of Kindred or Alliance, or for that they enjoy outward Bleſſings by living with him: But not for his Profeſſion and Practice of Sincerity. In Truth, all their Love reſts within their own Boſoms, and is ſpent upon themſelves: GOD's Glory, the Salvation of Souls, and the Good of Others, are ſerved at ſecond Hand, after themſelves, and their own ſinful Pleaſures. In a Word, the unregenerate Man loves only himſelf, in plotting and providing earthly Comforts, and temporal Happineſs, Love of all other Things,

and

and all other Loves in him, are ſwallowed up in Self-Love, as Rivers in the Sea. But it is far otherwiſe with every true Believer. He loves himſelf ſo, that he loves GOD infinitely more; he ſweetly embraces every true Chriſtian; he loves all other Things with Relation unto GOD, and his Glory. His Love unto himſelf is directed unto true Happineſs; not miſpent in furniſhing himſelf with Wealth, and earthly Pleaſures; but fervently employed in fitting his Soul with Grace, that it may live eternally in the Glory of Heaven.

LASTLY, That ſpecial Love which ſprings out of Nature, or ſome Kind of Nearneſs; (as to Wife, Children, Kindred, and Friends) and which where there is no Grace, like a great River, many Times overflows the Banks of Moderation, Diſcretion and Reaſon, is happily ſeaſoned and ſanctified by ſaving Faith, and made more fervent, comfortable and faithful.

1. No Man can truly love his Wife, but the true Chriſtian; he may love her Body, her Beauty, her Wealth, her Friends, the outward Comfort and Content ſhe brings with her; but he loves not her Soul; for he neither made his Choice for Grace, nor, being matched, doth chiefly wiſh and work her ſpiritual Good; he doth not grow with her in ſaving Graces, and Holineſs of Life, nor walk with her Hand in Hand, towards the Kingdom of Heaven. He loves her not for that ſhe was put into his Hand by GOD's Providence for his Portion. He loves her not, as *Chriſt* did his Spouſe, with a ſincere, chaſte, and ſpiritual Love, that he may beget more and more Holineſs in her, and preſerve her unſpotted from the World; that as they have lived together in the neareſt Bond, and deareſt Love upon Earth, ſo they might reign together

gether everlaſtingly. 2. Neither doth any unſanctified Man love his Children. He may love them as they are the Fruit of his Loins, the Hope of his Poſterity, and Pillar of his Name; but he doth not burn with that truly Chriſtian Love towards them, which begets a Zeal and Care to plant in them the true Fear of GOD, and Power of Religion. He toils to heap up for them earthly Treaſures; but he is careleſs in providing for them durable Riches. 3. Neither can any ungodly Man truly love his Friend. He may affect him for Pleaſure, for Profit, for his good Nature, his civil Carriage, moral Virtues, Knowledge and Wiſdom, Nobleneſs of Spirit, long Acquaintance, and the like; but he cannot poſſibly knit his Soul unto his Friend's, as the Soul of *Jonathan* was tied unto the Soul of *David*; that is, in the Fear of GOD, in an holy League for the keeping of a good Conſcience, ſtanding for GOD's Truth, and the Advancement of his Glory, in that golden Knot, and noble Tye of Chriſtianity. An ungodly Man's Love is earthly, natural, finite, mixed with many Fears, Diſtaſtes, and Jealouſies; with much Unquietneſs, Interruptions, and reſtleſs Longings; ſometimes it is furious, ſometimes faint; ſometimes weakened and weary with the free and eaſy Enjoyment of the Thing beloved; ſometimes it is afflicted with Deſpair, by Reſiſtance and Difficulty; ſometimes ſtrangled with Stings of Jealouſy; at the beſt it is but a Bitter-ſweet, and at laſt ends either in endleſs Divorce, or in Curſing each other in Hell for their unſanctified Love upon Earth. But ſpiritual Love, betwixt two Chriſtians, is of a more ſweet Diſpoſition, of a more laſting and heavenly Nature. Their dear Embracements and kind Offices are interchanged betwixt them, becauſe they ſee and know, that they are both Children of one Father; Brethren of *Chriſt Jeſus*; Begotten again by the

ſame

ſame Spirit; Born of the ſame immortal Seed of the Word; Nouriſhed with the ſame ſpiritual Food; Of one Houſhold of Faith; Pilgrims and Fellow-travellers towards the ſame everlaſting Home; And Co-heirs of the Kingdom of GOD. And therefore if once true Affection, grounded upon Grace, ſeize upon their Hearts; if once their two Streams of ſanctified Love, ſpringing out of the Fountain of their Love towards GOD, join themſelves in an holy and Chriſtian Fellowſhip, they grow in Sincerity and Strength, towards a great Torrent, untill they both are ſwallowed up in that bottomleſs Sea of endleſs Love, in the World above. The Love then of the true Chriſtian, is only true and worthy Embracement. 4. Laſtly, neither doth any unſanctified Man love truly his Kindred; he may have with them Merry-meetings and Feaſts; but to the Bond of Nature, there wants the Link of Grace, that ſacred Knot that is wont to tye together the Hearts of godly Men, ſo ſure, that no Croſs or Miſery, no Man or Devil, nor Time, nor yet Eternity, can ever untye. And only ſaving Faith is able to beget Love to our Enemies; who we are commanded expreſly to love and pray for. *Matt.* v. 44.

THUS far I have told you what Love ſaving Faith begets in the Hearts of true Chriſtians towards GOD, the Creatures, the Godly, Themſelves and to Others. I have ſtayed the longer upon the Point, becauſe many, when they hear of *Faith working by Love*, preſently apprehend it to be no more but relieving the Poor. When they are taught that they muſt join good Works to their Faith, they preſently think, that only Alms-Deeds are meant here. Whereas if a Man ſhould *feed the Poor with all his Goods*, 1 *Cor.* xiii. and yet want a true-hearted and zealous Love to GOD, his

his Word, his Miniſters, his Servants, his Sacraments, his Sabbaths, his Kingdom, and his Coming, it would profit him Nothing. If a Man were never ſo glorious for his Alms-Deeds, and ſhould not have a due Reſpect to all the Duties, both towards GOD and Man, enjoined by the Commandments, they would ſtand him in no Stead at the Day of Trial.

ALMS-Deeds, indeed are good and neceſſary, and ſtrictly commanded of GOD, *Eccleſ.* xi. 1. *Joh.* iii. 7. moſt pleaſing unto Him, *Iſa.* lviii. 5, 6, 7. And highly rewarded by Him, *Prov.* xix. 17. *Luke* xvi. 9. If they be our own lawfully come by, given with a Heart purged by Faith from an evil Conſcience, and dead Works; with ſpiritual Diſcretion in preferring the Saints in all Favours and Furtherances, with Seaſonableneſs, Compaſſion and Chearfulneſs, they are a precious Seed ſown upon Earth, the Crop whereof ſhall be reaped in the Heavens. But if an Holy Flame of Love to GOD, his Honour, Truth and Service; to all good Things, godly Exerciſes, and true Chriſtians, be not firſt kindled in the Heart, by the ſanctifying Spirit; if there be not a Reſpect to all GOD's Commandments, a Delight in all holy Duties, and Hatred to all Sins; all our Alms-Deeds, all our good Works are unto ourſelves utterly unprofitable. Theſe ought to be done proportionably to our Ability, and the other Graces to be poſſeſt in Sincerity, if we look for Salvation. A good Man muſt not only apply his Hand, but principally his Heart to the Exerciſe of Well doing. There is the royal Seat of Divine Love, and the holy Offspring of a fruitful Faith, which giveth Life to all good Actions. Beſides the Confutation of a common Error, this ſerves to comfort poor Chriſtians, to whom this hard World denieth Wealth. For Love (the fairеſt

faireſt and lovelieſt Iſſue of a ſaving Faith) is not placed in the Purſe, but planted in the Heart.

CANST thou mourn with diſtreſſed Chriſtians, and unfeignedly ſorrow for their Griefs? Canſt thou ſpeak comfortably unto an afflicted Conſcience, and refreſh a broken and bruiſed Spirit? Canſt thou pray heartily for the Converſion of thy moſt implacable Enemy? Doſt thou labour upon all Occaſions, by Inſtructions, Admonitions and ſeaſonable Reproofs, to draw others out of their Ignorance and Sins, to ſaving Knowledge, and into the Ways of GOD? Why then thou art very rich and glorious in Alms-Deeds, for ſo thou doeſt Good to the Souls of thy Brethren; one of which is of far more Worth than the Bodies of all Men living. Thou enricheſt thy Brother with heavenly Treaſures, which are much more precious, than any Relief conferred upon the Body; the very School-Men being Witneſſes:

Conſule, caſtiga, ſolare, remitte, fer, ora;
is better than,
Viſito, pото, cibo, redimo, tego, colligo, condo.

Durand. *l.* iv. *d.* 15. *q.* 7.

To conclude this Point, true Faith doth ever in the firſt Place kindle in the Heart a zealous Love to GOD, and all Godlineſs; then to our own Souls, whereby we are ſtirred up to furniſh them with all ſaving Graces; then to the Souls of our Brethren, that they may be brought to everlaſting Happineſs; then to their Bodies and Lives, that we may refreſh and relieve them according to their Wants, as the LORD ſhall makes us able; after to all Creatures, as we ſhall ſee and obſerve, the Power, Wiſdom and Glory of our gracious GOD to ſhine in them.

7. SE-

7. SEVENTHLY, the Conflict between the Spirit and the Flesh, is a notable Mark of saving Faith. Unsanctified Men are for the most Part meer Strangers to the Troubles of Conscience. *Satan* keeps them in his Chains, without any great Noise or Stir without any Controllment or Contradiction. But if once this strong Man be dispossest of his Holds, by the Spirit of the LORD *Jesus*, and the Power of Faith, then begins this sore and lasting Combat betwixt the Flesh and the Spirit.

BUT lest you deceive yourselves in this Mark, you must know, that there may be many inward Tumults, even in a prophane and unregenerate Man. There may be a Combat in him, 1. Between Reason and Affection. Reason many Times may distaste that which Affection doth furiously urge upon him. 2. Between natural Conscience, and natural Passions. 3. Between a Desire of preserving his Reputation, and a Delight in some infamous Sin. 4. Between the Fear of Vengeance from above, and a Purpose to continue in the Pleasures of Sin. 5. Between a Purpose to live the Life of the Wicked, and a Desire *to die the Death of the Righteous.*

BESIDES such Conflicts as these, in unregenerate Men, the best of them may moreover, 6. by the Aid of the Spirit, strive against all outward Sins for a Time, and some gross Sins all their Life long. But this is not that Conflict between the Flesh and the Spirit, which I make a Mark of a justified Man. This in the Child of GOD is fierce, universal and constant. It is not Playing a Prize for Reputation, but for Life and Death. It is not for the Displanting of one Sin, or two, but for the utter Dethroning of all Sin. The Spirit in this Fight is ever so far victorious, that it suffers not the Flesh

to

to reign. It will admit of no Parley, take no Truce, or liſten to any Terms of Capitulation; but is ſtill Sweating and Toiling, and in Blood to the Knees, for the Cauſe of Heaven, and in the Quarrel of Salvation. And if it cannot ſo ſubdue the Fleſh as it ſhould, and doth earneſtly deſire, it mourns and grieves, and buckles faſter unto itſelf the whole Chriſtian Armour: So that ever at length GOD gives a comfortable Iſſue in this Chriſtian Combat, and moſt certain Victory. If it be ſo then, that thou feel the Combat betwixt the Fleſh and the Spirit within thee; and after that Combat, Comfort by the Victory of the Spirit over the Fleſh; then aſſuredly Faith hath gone before, GOD Himſelf is the Man of War, and the Spirit of the LORD JESUS hath deſtroyed the Power of Darkneſs within thee.

8. EIGHTHLY, The Spirit of Prayer doth ever accompany Faith. The moſt Unlearned, if the LORD enlighten his Conſcience by the Law, and affect his Heart with a true Taſte of heavenly Sweetneſs, will find Words to expreſs the Wants and Grievances of his hungry and humbled Soul: For the Spirit of GOD giveth Utterance, opens the Lips, and unties the Strings both of Heart and Tongue, to all thoſe whom he ſanctifies by ſaving Faith, and endues with a Sight and Senſe of Sin.

As for unregenerate Men, 1. Some are ſo ſottiſhly ignorant in all Matters of Heaven, and ſo ſenſleſs of their ſinful and accurſed State, that they never pray at all; never utter a Groan, or Word unto GOD, either for the Removal of any Corruption, or Supply of any Grace. In a cold, formal Faſhion their Bodies may be preſent at publick Prayer, but they cannot remember the Day when ever

they poured out their Souls in Private, before the Throne of Grace, or with their Families.

2. OTHERS there are, who are Men of great Understanding for worldly Businesses, and able to discourse largely of other Matters; and yet they have not the Wisdom to contrive, or the Tongue to deliver two or three Sentences in feeling and seasonable Prayer: They cannot, for their Lives, hold out a Quarter of an Hour in laying open their spiritual Estate before GOD. They use sometimes to cry out: LORD, *have Mercy upon us!* GOD *be thanked for all his Blessings!* But as for longer Prayer, they think not of it. Miserable Men! it is only the Want of the Feeling of your Sins, which makes you want Words to pour out your Souls unto GOD.

3. SOME others there are, poor, ignorant Souls, that Evening and Morning post over the LORD's Prayer, the Creed, and perhaps the Ten Commandments; thinking that is sufficient Seeking unto GOD. But alas! this is but only Lip-labour, and lost Labour.

4. OTHERS there are, who in Extremities fall to their Prayers, like the Mariners with *Jonas*, ch. i. 5. But if once the Storm be overblown, they are as prophane and prayerless as they were before.

5. OTHERS, a Kind of outside Christians, lest they should be thought stark Athiests, are content for the most Part to suffer Prayers to be read Evening and Morning in their Houses; especially upon good Days, and when they are not too full of worldly Business. But this holy Business is performed with such Irreverence, Coldness and Indevotion, that it may plainly appear the Spirit of Prayer

Prayer is not in their Houſes, nor the Power of Grace in their Hearts.

6. LASTLY, Some unſanctified Men there are, who deceive even the true Chriſtians in this Point. They are, 1. Such as either have been brought up amongſt good Chriſtians; and ſo by often hearing and obſerving others, and being ſometimes put unto Practice themſelves, grow into a Habit of praying, though it be but by Rote. Or, 2. They may be formal Profeſſors, who, while their Joy is in the Word, may ſometimes make a fair Shew this Way. And moſt of all, ſome Miniſters may deceive in this Point even the beſt diſcerning Spirits for a Time: For by reading Books, and imitating thoſe who are truly zealous in Prayer, they may furniſh themſelves, with a Method of Prayer; and may give Life to it in the Delivery. Theſe may ſeem outwardly more fervent in Prayer, than ſome of GOD's faithful Servants.

Now leſt we be deceived in this Point, let us conceive three Kinds of Fervency in Prayer: 1. A natural Fervency. Some Men out of a quick Conſtitution, deliver Things with much Heat, Life, and Paſſion. 2. An artificial Fervency; when Men by Art learn to animate their Words, with pleaſing, fit, and moving Action. 3. Spiritual Fervency; when a ſacred Flame is kindled in the Heart, by GOD's ſanctifying Spirit, whereby a Man doth feelingly and powerfully throw out the Longings of his Heart. This laſt is peculiar to the Chriſtian; the other may be found in unſanctified Men.

THERE may alſo be conceived three Kinds of Coldneſs in Prayer: 1. Of Diſcretion; out of which a Man may be ſoft and ſober in Speech, but

weighty in his Actions, and powerful in his Exhortations. 2. Of Complexion; when a Man ſanctified and zealous in Heart, and yet by Reaſon of natural Indiſpoſition, cannot expreſs himſelf outwardly, with half that Zeal and Fervency as he doth deſire. 3. Of Ungraciouſneſs; when a Man's Soul is ſo frozen in the Dregs of Sin, that he is poſſeſt with Deadneſs and Drowſineſs of Spirit.

NOW certain it is, that ſome unregenerate Men by the Aid of natural and artificial Fervency, may carry a fairer Shew of Zeal in the Delivery of their Prayer, than ſome ſanctified Men, who by their natural Indiſpoſition, are hindred from expreſſing outwardly the holy Heat that lies hid in their Hearts. Thus far, and in theſe Caſes the State of Unregeneration doth commonly partake of Prayer: But that holy Grace and powerful Spirit of Prayer which ever follows ſaving Faith, and doth ſweetly ſuſtain the Hearts of all GOD's Children in the greateſt Diſtreſſes, is another Kind of Matter.

TRUE Chriſtians do not only make Conſcience of Prayer in publick, and in their private Families, but they have alſo many earneſt Groanings, many dear and precious Conferences, much comfortable Communication with GOD in ſecret. Nay, and beſides their Devotion at publick Prayer, their Care in praying with their Families, and their Zeal in private Prayer betwixt GOD and themſelves even in Company, *Nehe.* ii. 4. and amidſt the Affairs of their Calling, they have many ſudden and fervent Ejaculations, upon every Stirring of Sin, and leſſer Aberration in their Thoughts, Words or Carriages. They have many broken Sighs, and ſpiritual Sallies, darted out ſuddenly, and born of the preſent Occaſion, whereby, with an inviſible Fervency, they repel the haſty Aſſaults of many ſud-

den

den Temptations, abominate many fearful Thoughts ſtarting up in their Hearts before they be aware, which for their Horribleneſs and Hateſulneſs, they are aſhamed to utter to Others. They have many ſudden and inviſible Liftings up of the Heart in Praiſes and Thankfulneſs, upon the Receipt of every Bleſſing and Mercy; even for comfortable Thoughts, which come into their own Hearts, for gracious Speeches, which proceed from others, for many remarkable Paſſages of GOD's Providence, and Bleſſings in their Buſineſs and Affairs of their Calling.

Now to theſe two latter Branches of Prayer, to wit, in ſecret betwixt GOD and a Man's ſelf, with many zealous Wreſtlings, and holy Importunities, for Removal of Corruptions, and Supply of Grace; and within a Man's own Heart, abroad in Company, or amidſt his Buſineſs, as Occaſion and Neceſſity is offered; I ſay, to thoſe two Practices of Prayer, in a feeling and a fruitful Manner, unregenerate Men are mere Strangers. It may be they may have now and then, at ſolemn Times, in ſet Places, (perhaps upon ſuperſtitious Occaſions) certain ſhort formal Wiſhes, but they are heartleſs and cold, the Off-ſprings of ſome Cuſtom; not of Zeal and Feeling. It may be, now and then they may catch a Prayer-book into their Hands, when they have nothing elſe to do; when ſome Croſs is upon their Family; when the Time is coming for the Sacrament; and may hurry over certain Prayers; but to do this with inward Feeling; or to pour out the Soul before GOD, with a true Senſe of ſpiritual Wants, is above their ordinary Reach. Or if they ſhould ſet upon this holy Duty of private Prayer, they could not poſſibly continue: "For either Praying will make them leave Sin-"ning, or Sinning will make them leave Pray-"ing."

BUT the Child of GOD is much converſant in private Prayer. His Heart would even burſt for Heavineſs, amidſt the Variety of Trials, were it not ſtill revived, ſuſtained, and refreſhed by an hearty and holy Conference with GOD. There is not a Chriſtian but he is now and then raged againſt by the World, roared at by *Satan*, and railed upon by prophane Men. Now in this and the like Caſes Recourſe unto GOD by Prayer doth eaſe his Heart with Joy unſpeakable. He is there ſatisfied by heavenly Inſpirations, (for heavenly Inſpirations from above, and our hearty Groans, and holy Deſires aſcending up, are as ſo many Angels of Intercourſe between GOD and us): I ſay, he is there aſſured that all his Sufferings and Wrongs for *Chriſt*'s Sake, add Weight and Glory to his Crown of Life, and that at length, in Deſpight of all contrary Power and Policy, *His Righteouſneſs ſhall be brought forth as the Light*, (Pſal. xxxvii.) *and his Judgment as the Noon-Day.*

9. NINTHLY, Comfort in Diſtreſs, Joy in Tribulations, Glorying in Afflictions, give notable Teſtimonies of juſtifying Faith. *Being juſtified by Faith*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *Rom.* v. beſides Peace with GOD, Acceſs unto his Grace, Hope of his Glory; *We alſo rejoice in Tribulation.* By this Faith the Apoſtles *rejoiced that they were counted worthy to ſuffer for* Chriſt's *Name*, Acts v. 41. If once we plant our Refuge above, and our Comfort in a ſweet Fruition of GOD, and a feeling Apprehenſion of his Preſence, it will eaſily overmatch any worldly Sorrow, hold out againſt the Ruins both of Heaven and Earth, being infinitely above all Caſualties and Uncertainties.

BUT againſt this Point it may be objected; Firſt, If it be ſo, that ſuch a Deal of Comfort be

the Portion of true Chriſtians, and that in Troubles and Diſtreſſes too; how comes it to paſs that prophane Men are many Times more merry than they? I anſwer: Unſanctified Men take not Sin to Heart; they put far from them the evil Day; and therefore no Marvel, tho' they rejoice in the Face; (for *their Rejoicing is only in the Face, and not in the Heart*; they have ſmiling Countenances, but bleeding Conſciences). A comfortable Heart, and compoſed Countenance, may be ſweet Companions, when inward Joy, and loud Laughter may dwell far enough aſunder.

IT is the Practice indeed of ungodly Men, becauſe they want inward and ſound Comforts in their Miſeries and Afflictions, to fly to outward Mirth, to remove the Diſcomforts of their Hearts: But theſe Remedies are far more poiſonous than the Malady; for they either plunge them deeper into the Dungeon of Melancholy, or draw over a Skin, that the Sore may feſter more dangerouſly. Thus tho' they look big in the World, certain it is, there is no ſound Comfort, or *inward Peace to the Wicked*. But it is not ſo with the Saints of GOD. They have indeed many Occaſions of Sadneſs; they are many Times troubled with their own Sins, with the Sins of others, with the Iniquities of the Times, with the Afflictions of the Church, with Doubts about ſome Caſe of Conſcience, or with Care for a right Diſcharge of the Duties of their Calling. But Sadneſs for theſe Cauſes, begets in their Heart Joy unſpeakable and glorious; whereas ſinful Delights breed Heavineſs in the Heart, *and the Worm that never dies*. Let no Man then plead for the Pleaſure of Good-Fellowſhip, for *there is no Peace, ſaith my* GOD, *to the Wicked*. Let no Man take Offence at the outward Troubles of the Chriſtian, *for the End of that Man*, whoſoever he be, *is Peace*.

IT may be objected, Secondly, that many wicked Men, who have not ſo much as a Shadow of ſaving Faith, are ſometimes very bold, and confident in great Diſtreſſes. I anſwer: That Confidence in Afflictions, which appears in the Carriage of unſanctified Men, doth not ſpring from any ſound Comfort in the Heart, as it doth in faithful Chriſtians, but from ſuch Cauſes as theſe. In ſome unſanctified Men Comfort may ſpring from ſeeking the Fame of Undauntedneſs of Spirit, and high Reſolution. In ſome it may ſpring from a groundleſs Perſuaſion of being in GOD's Favour: And this may be ſometimes in formal Chriſtians, even upon their Death-Beds. But their counterfeit Comfort doth as far differ from that of the true Chriſtians, as a Dream of Gold, from the real Poſſeſſion of it. In others, a furious Zeal, and an impudent Conceit, that they ſuffer in the Cauſe of GOD, may beget great Boldneſs and Reſolution, even amidſt the Terrors of Death.

THERE has appeared in ſeveral *Papiſts*, who have ſuffered among us for their Treaſons, a Kind of unhallowed Fury, that has ſpirited them up to Undauntedneſs of Mind and Courage in their Death: But a Man of an impartial Underſtanding and diſcerning Spirt, would ſcarcely wiſh a clearer Demonſtration of the Truth of our Religion, than to mark the Difference of the Ends of our bleſſed Martyrs in Queen *Mary*'s Time, and of thoſe *Popiſh* Traitors. The Boldneſs and Cheerfulneſs of theſe Pſeudo-Martyrs at their End, is ſo formal and artificial; their Prayers ſo unhearty, plodding, and perfunctory; their Carriage ſo unlike the Saints of GOD, and without thoſe feeling Elevations of Spirit, which are wont to fill the Souls which are ready to enter into the Joys of Heaven, that a Man acquainted with the Power of Sanctification, may clearly

clearly ſee their Comfort to ſpring from no higher Fountain than natural Reſolution, and ſtrong Conceit. But it is otherwiſe with the true Martyrs of *Jeſus*. They had ſuch an holy and humble Majeſty in their Carriage; ſuch a Deal of Heaven, and ſober Undauntedneſs in their Faces; ſuch ſpiritual Raviſhments in their Hearts; ſuch Grace and powerful Piercings in their Speeches; ſuch Zeal and hearty Meltings in their Prayers; ſuch holy Triumphs, and heavenly Exultations amidſt the Flames, that it was more than manifeſt both to Heaven and Earth, to Men and to Angels, that their Cauſe was the Cauſe of GOD. In a Word, the Chriſtians Comfort in Diſtreſs, riſing from an Aſſurance of GOD's Favour, by a true and fruitful Faith, doth as far differ from all the counterfeit Comforts, the groundleſs Confidences of unregenerate Men, as the real Poſſeſſion of Riches, from an imaginary Dream thereof; as the true and natural Grape, which fills and glads the Heart, from the painted Grape, that only feeds the Eye; as a ſtrong and mighty Oak, rooted deeply in the Earth, which no Tempeſt can overturn, from a Staff ſtuck into the Ground, which every Hand may ſnatch away, or Blaſt of Wind ſupplant or overthrow.

THUS far of the Marks of ſaving Faith. But yet I cannot get out of this Point, without obſerving to you ſome Differences between ſaving and temporary Faith; the Matter is of ſo great Weight and Conſequence. Thouſands there are, who deceive themſelves, and walk on ſecurely in the Ways of Death, becauſe they do not throughly try and conſider what their ſpiritual Eſtate is in this Behalf; whether they be ſoundly built upon the Rock by ſaving Faith; or whether by ſome Flaſhes of temporary Faith, they flouriſh only for a While, like Corn ſcatter'd in ſtony Ground; and ſo, when their

Sins

Sins are ripe, ſhall be thrown into the Fire of Hell, except in the mean Time they come forward, from an *outward Form* of Religion, to *inward Feeling*; and from *almoſt*, become *altogether* Chriſtians.

YOU muſt here remember, that I told you before, how temporary Faith can work: 1. Some Meaſure of inward Illumination. 2. Some Kind of Converſion. 3. Some Degrees of Regeneration. 4. Some outward Reformation. I will then only briefly lay down, ſome Differences betwixt it and ſaving Faith, in theſe four Points:

FIRST, For inward Illumination: It ſhould not ſeem ſtrange, that an Unbeliever ſhould be ſometimes, in a great Meaſure, enlighten'd and endued with Divine Knowledge; for it is a Truth clear in Divinity, and common in Experience, that there may be the Spirit of Illumination, with a plentiful Knowledge of the Truth, where there is wanting the Spirit of Sanctification, the Life of Goodneſs, and the Light of ſaving Faith. GOD is true and good; we loſt his Image of Truth and Goodneſs in *Adam*; we muſt either have the Light of Truth ſhed again into our Underſtandings by the Spirit of Illumination, and the Life of Goodneſs reinſpired into our Hearts by the Spirit of Sanctification, or we cannot be ſaved. We muſt have two Wings, the one of Truth, the other of Goodneſs, if we would ſoar aloft unto the Sun of all Truth and Goodneſs. But many certainly have but the one Wing, that of Knowledge, and thereby make only a fair Fluttering upon Earth; but upon their Death-bed they find themſelves utterly unfit for that laſt Flight towards the Sun of Righteouſneſs. If Sanctification be not added to our inward Illumination and Knowledge, theſe Latter will but double our Damnation. That you may thoroughly

roughly examine your Souls in this Point, and clearly discern whether your Knowledge be sanctified by saving Faith, you must call to Mind, and consider the Marks of saving Knowledge, which I have formerly delivered. At this Time I will only add two more.

1. KNOWLEDGE in the formal Professor, is like Lightning; it dazzles perhaps the Eyes with Astonishment and Admiration of those Excellencies which it beholds in the Book of GOD: It commonly blasts the Heart with Pride and Self-Love. But Knowledge sanctified with saving Faith, is like the Light of the Sun; it cheerfully opens the Eyes of the Soul, that with Comfort and Reverence, with Love and Praisefulness, they may feed upon the great Mystery of Godliness. It heats the Heart and Affections with true, kindly and discreet Zeal: It sends out its Beams seasonably and continually, for the enlighting and reforming of Others: It lightens the Christian out of all the Darkness of Sin, and crooked By-paths, and guides him into the holy Passages of all the Commandments.

SECONDLY, Knowledge in the Formal Professor, is like the speculative Knowledge of a Geographer. This is purchased without any great Toil or Travel, without Feeling or Experience, only by Reading, Relation and Discourse. He sits in a dry Chamber, and looks upon a fair Map, and there with a pleasant Ease, and delightful Safety, doth behold the Rocks and Streights and dangerous Passages, without Danger or Distress; he feeds his Conceit upon the Wonders of foreign Countries, and the new-found World, with the restless Pinnace of his piercing Discourse; he flies over the most boisterous, huge and tempestuous Seas, with the speedy Wing of his nimble Wit; he runs over the woody Moun-

Mountains, the fruitful Plains, the ſpacious Foreſts, the ſpicey Gardens, the pleaſant Rivers, the rich and golden Mines, or whatſoever the whole Earth hath beſides, wonderful and magnificent: But all this is but only in Conceit, without real Paſſage and viſible Enjoyment. Juſt ſuch is the Knowledge of the formal Profeſſor; it ſtands moſt in Diſcourſe and Speculation. It beholds afar off the Majeſty of Heaven, the Wonders of GOD's Law, the Myſtery of Salvation, the troubleſome Seas of Temptations, the Paradiſe of Chriſtianity, and many other holy Paſſages of Divinity, but it is without toilſome Practice, or feeling Experience. But Knowledge in the true Chriſtian, is like the experimental Knowledge of a Traveller: He doth not only by his Reading, Hearing and Conferring, fill his Brain with Knowledge, and his Tongue with Diſcourſe of Heaven, and thoſe endleſs Joys; but with the Eye of Faith, he clearly ſees them, and ſenſibly feeds upon them by the Power of his Hope. He doth not only with an imaginary Fruition gaze upon *the Wonders of* GOD's *Law*, and Secrets of his Kingdom; but with the Keys of his ſaving Knowledge unlocks and opens them wide; dives into their Depths with fruitful Meditation, and by a full Inſight, and real Enjoyment of them, makes them familiar unto him. He takes not only a general Survey of the great Myſtery of Godlineſs, but by the *Spirit of Wiſdom and Revelation*, he is able, in ſome good Degree, to meaſure *the Heighth, the Breadth, the Length and Depth of it*. He doth not only quietly ſitting at Home, or ſtanding ſafe upon Shore, behold the furious Rage, and tempeſtuous Seas of Temptation in other Men; but himſelf is toſſed and turmoiled with them, and by the Grace of GOD paſſeth thro' them. He doth not only hear of the ſore Pangs of the New-birth, and of the ſtraight Paſſage to the King-

dom

dom of Heaven, but himſelf travels with that ſpiritual Sorrow, and treads that narrow Path. He doth not only read of the golden Mines, chryſtal Mountains, ſpicey Iſlands, the Coaſts of Pearls, and Rocks of Diamonds; I mean the unvaluable Treaſures, royal Prerogatives, and glorious Comforts of Chriſtianity; but himſelf is enriched and inveſted with them, and fills his Soul with their ſpiritual Sweetneſs. And thus far of the Difference betwixt ſaving and temporary Faith, in the Point of inward Illumination.

2. SECONDLY, As to Converſion; theſe Alterations may be found in the State of Unregeneration; and there may be theſe Converſions and yet no Salvation: 1. A moral Change from notorious Converſation, to a ſober and civil Carriage. 2. A formal Change, which is an Addition of an outward Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, to a moral Honeſty. 3. A mental Change, whereby the natural Darkneſs of the Underſtanding is in ſome Meaſure diſpelled. 4. A temporary Change, ſuch an one as in Scripture is called the *unclean Spirits going out of a Man*. But where there is juſtifying Faith, there is a ſupernatural, full, univerſal, thorough Converſion of the whole Man, Spirit, Soul and Body, from Satan, Sin, and earthly Delights, to GOD's Service, Holineſs of Life, and Love of heavenly Things. There is an Aboliſhing of the accurſed Image of *Satan* and a Renewing of the Image of GOD, in ſaving Knowledge, Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs, both in Heart and Life. This ſound Chriſtian Converſion, which is ever a Companion of juſtifying Faith, is diſcernible from all partial, hollow, half Converſions, by its Integrity, Sincerity, Growth and Conſtancy.

I. THIS Change is ever with Integrity of all the Parts and Powers both of Soul and Body. And tho' no Power or Part hath its abſolute Perfection of Sanctification; yet every Power and Part in every true Chriſtian, hath its Part and Meaſure of Sanctification: He is changed wholly, univerſally, in his Spirit, Soul, and Body.

FIRST, In his Spirit: That is, 1. In his Underſtanding: This before, at beſt but gilded over, and guided with ſome Glimmerings of Divine Notions, but ſtuffed with much Pride, Prophaneneſs, and Vanity, is now enlightened with a clear Inſight into the Myſtery of Godlineſs, and with that particular ſaving Knowledge, which is attended with Humility and Holineſs. 2. In his Judgment: This which before, being wholly poſſeſſed with Error, Crookedneſs, and Perverſeneſs, was wont to *put Darkneſs for Light, and Light for Darkneſs; to juſtify the Wicked, and condemn the Juſt*; is now furniſhed with ſpiritual Diſcretion, to guide himſelf in the right Path, amidſt infinite crooked Ways of Vanity and Iniquity, and with the Spirit of Diſcerning, that he can diſcover the Power of Grace in other Men; ſo that he no longer accounts Sanctification Preciſeneſs, or that which they call Good-Fellowſhip, fit for a Chriſtian. 3. In his Memory: This which before was Water, to receive, and Marble, to retain, the Impreſſions of Vanity and Folly, but as a Sieve to the Water of Life, and all godly Leſſons, is now greedy of ſaving Knowledge, and deſirous to forget thoſe ſinful Notions which he treaſured up in the Days of Vanity. 4. In his Conſcience: This which before was fearful or benumbed, and heartleſs to all holy Things, is now awakened and refreſhed with a Senſe and Feeling of GOD's Mercy pardoning its Sins, endued with a gracious Diſpoſition to ſpiritual Exerciſes,

ercises, and Tenderness, sensible of the least Iniquity.

SECONDLY, In his Soul: That is, 1. In his Will: This which before was wedded to the Liberty of the Flesh, to the Lusts of Men, *and to the Pride of Life*, is now weaned from all her temporal Vanities, and fallen in Love with eternal Pleasures. 2. In his Affections: These which before were carried with an headlong Torrent upon the World, in Pursuit of Pleasures, do now turn their Edge towards GOD's Glory, and a Crown of Life. They were the most fierce and furious Agents for the Sovereignty of the Flesh; but now are crucified, and their Inordinateness mortified. 3. In the Desires and Imaginations of his Heart: These which before were without Bridle or Check, are now turned by the last Commandment, controlled by a tender Conscience, kept in Awe by a Consideration of GOD's all-seeing Eye, and confined within an holy Compass; from their idle and prophane Wanderings.

THIRDLY, In his Body: That is, his Eyes, his Ears, his Tongue, his Feet, his Hands, and all the Parts thereof: As before they have been Windows to let in Vanities and Lusts, Instruments of Iniquity, and Executioners of many covetous, cruel, or lustful Designs; so now they are become as Centinels to descry the Approach of Sin; well appointed to do the Will of GOD; set apart and sanctified for the Service of the New Man. The whole Body, which before was *a Cage of all unclean Birds, and a Sink of Sin*, is now become a spiritual *Temple for the living* GOD, *and an Habitation for the Holy Ghost.*

II. As a ſound and ſaving Converſion is ever with Integrity of all the Powers both of Soul and Body; ſo it is alſo with Sincerity, as well in the inmoſt Affections, as in the outmoſt Converſation; in the Heart, as in the Life; in the ſecret Purpoſes, Deſires, and Conceits, as in open Carriage; in the Thoughts and Imaginations, as in the Words and Actions.

III. A SOUND Converſion is ſeen by Growth in Grace, which is ever an unſeparable Companion of ſpiritual Life. Unregenerate Men either grow from bad to worſe, or ſtand at a Stay; but if once we are *tranſlated from Darkneſs to Light*, there is then an *Increaſing with the Increaſe of* GOD, Col. ii. 19, *A going on from Strength to Strength, 'till we appear before* GOD *in* Sion, Pſal. lxxxiv. 7.

IV. THE Soundneſs of Converſion appears by Conſtancy in the Courſe of Grace and Holineſs. The true Convert not only grows for a little Time, but continues to grow up unto perfect Holineſs in the Fear of GOD. 2 *Cor.* ii. 1. 'till they are renewed after the Image of Him that created them. *Col.* iii. 10. Whereas other Converts, who are led by no higher Guide, than the Power of a temporary Faith, are in and out, off and on, to and fro, in Matters of Religion. Sometimes they will be forward and hot, ſometimes cold and formal: Their Courage in good Cauſes, and their Converſion from Ill, is as their Faith, temporary; *their Goodneſs is as a Morning Cloud, and as the Morning Dew that goeth away.*

THUS far of that weighty and important Point, concerning the Differences betwixt temporary Faith, and ſaving Faith; that Fountain of Life, and Jewel of Heaven, which puts us into preſent Poſſeſ-

Poſſeſſion of the Kingdom of Grace, and by ſound Evidences of the Promiſes of Salvation, ſealed with the precious Blood of *Chriſt Jeſus*, entitles us to everlaſting Joys in another World.

THIS may ſuffice for the Trial of our Faith, before the Receiving of the Sacrament.

☞ As *for the Trial of the Reſt of the Graces formerly mentioned, as required to a right and comfortable Receiving*, *viz.* Repentance, new Obedience *and* Love, *the Author was prevented by Death from proſecuting them according to his Intention. That which hath been written, I commend to* GOD's *Bleſſing, and the Good of his Church.*



A

TREATISE

ON

Faſting.

2 CHRON. XX. 3.

And Jehoſhaphat *feared, and ſet himſelf to ſeek the* LORD, *and proclaimed a Faſt throughout all* Judah.

THE Exerciſe of Faſting is a ſpecial Means to move GOD to beſtow Bleſſings upon us, and to deliver us out of all Afflictions and Dangers. And how powerful this Ordinance hath been; Firſt, For obtaining ſome ſpecial Good, ſee in *Nehem.* i. 4, 11. *Ezr.* viii. 21. *Eſth.* iv. 16. *Acts* xiii. 3. and xiv. 23. Secondly, For removing the Evil of Sin, in *Acts* ix. 9. 11. 1 *Sam.* vii. 6.

Ez.

Ezr. ix. 3, 6. and x. 6. *Jud.* xx. 26. *Neh.* ix. 12. And Thirdly, for removing the Evil of Puniſhment. 1. Imminent, in *Iſaiah* xxii. 12. *Jonah* iii. 5, 6. 2 *Chron.* xx. 3. 2. Preſent; as Famine, in *Joel* i. 14. and ii. 12, 15. The Sword, in *Joſh.* vii. 6. *Judg.* xx. Captivity, in *Dan.* ix. 3. Sickneſs, in 2 *Sam.* xii. 16. *Pſal.* xxxv. 13. and Peſtilence, in 1 *Kings* viii. 37, 38. 2 *Sam.* xxiv.

BUT before I proceed farther in this Point, let me obſerve to you, in the firſt Place, the general Character of *Jehoſhaphat*, as it is recorded, ch. xvii. 3, 4. *And the* LORD *was with* Jehoſhaphat, *becauſe he walked in the firſt Ways of his Father* David, *and ſought not unto* Baalim; *but ſought to the* LORD GOD *of his Fathers, and walked in his Commandments, and not after the Doings of* Iſrael. Yet notwithſtanding this, we find him in great Diſtreſs, by Means of the *Moabites* and *Ammonites*, who were about to invade his Land. From whence we may learn, that the People of GOD may fall into great Extremities, and to the Eye of Reaſon, deſperate and irrecoverable Straits. Deepeſt Miſeries are many Times the Portion of GOD's deareſt Children. It is a Decree of Heaven reſolved upon, and ratified by the LORD our GOD, confirmed by the Experience of all the Patriarchs and Prophets, of the Apoſtles and Profeſſors of *Chriſt*, of all the Saints and Servants, nay, of the Son of GOD Himſelf, that *we muſt through many Tribulations enter into the Kingdom of* GOD, *Acts* xiv. 22.

Now there are two general Ends of Afflictions, in thoſe who are fruitfully exerciſed therewith. 1. To mortify, purge, and ſcour out of us, Corruptions and Sins; and 2. To try, refine, and encreaſe all Graces in us. As,

FIRST,

FIRST, Faith is much ſtrengthen'd by Afflictions; becauſe, 1. They drive us with more Reverence and Feeling unto the Means, which are wont to quicken and confirm our Faith. Now Faith is both in the Mind and in the Heart; and as it is diſcerned by the Change of both, ſo it receives further Growth in both. The Fire of Affliction gives great Light unto the Underſtanding, and as ſharp Eye-Salves, tho' for the preſent they dazzle the Sight, yet after, they ſingularly clear the Eyes of the Mind, to ſee ſpiritual Things, and diſcern the Ways of GOD. When a Man is drunken with worldly Proſperity, or caſt into a dead Sleep of Security, the ſenſual Heart ſends up, as it were, earthly Fumes into the Head, which infatuate the Underſtanding: But when by a Faſt of Afflictions we are freed from this Surfeit, and that long Abſtinence hath worn out the intoxicating Fumes of worldly Vanities, then do we recover our Underſtanding, whereby we are enabled to judge and diſcern more clearly of the Ways of GOD, and great Myſtery of Grace.

AGAIN, Afflictions put Faith to the Exerciſe of all its Vigour and Powers, and makes it try and employ the utmoſt of its ſpiritual Abilities every Way; and that makes it grow more ſtrong and victorious. Without Encounter and Aſſault, Faith languiſhes, and lies hid; but in Storms, it ſtirs up itſelf, gathers its Powers together, and ſeeks for Aſſiſtance by Prayer, Meditation upon ſpecial Promiſes, and experimental Recording former Mercies. Faith grows at ſuch Times, both in Reſpect of a more freſh, affectionate, and ſweet Survey, and Embracement of its Objects; which are, 1. The Merits of *Chriſt*. 2. The Promiſes of GOD. And 3. The Providence of GOD. And alſo in Reſpect of Quickening with more Life, theſe Parts of

of itſelf which ſhew themſelves in the Heart; which are, 1. Deſires; extreme Longings after Pardon of all paſt and preſent Sins in the Blood of *Chriſt*. And 2. Repoſe and Reſting in the bleeding Boſom of *Jeſus Chriſt*.

And when the Eye of Faith looks through the Clouds and Storms of Afflictions, upon ſuch Places as theſe: 1 *Theſſ.* iii. 3. *Acts* xiv. 22. *Heb.* xii. 7, 8. it is more cleared and ſtrengthened in itſelf, and conveys unto the Heart more Light and Aſſurance of his Adoption. For Afflictions attended with true Humiliation, Prayer, and a ſincere Purpoſe to profit by them, are comfortable Marks of God's ſpecial Favour. The Stones and Timber, which the Maſon and Carpenter hew, ſmooth, poliſh and ſquare, are certainly choſen for Building; but that which they neglect and paſs by, is to be thrown as Rubbiſh into the Highways, or to be burnt in the Fire. It is ſo in this Caſe; whom the Lord doth poliſh by Afflictions, he ſingles out to be Stones in his ſpiritual Temple; but thoſe which He lets lie quiet in the Mire of the World, are fatting againſt the Day of Slaughter.

And as Faith, the Parent of other ſaving Graces, is notably ſtrengthened by Afflictions; ſo by Conſequence, all her bleſſed Brood receive proportionable Strength. 1. Our ſpiritual Hope is in the full Tide, when our worldly Hopes are at the greateſt Ebb. 2. Our Love is more won unto God, by his Weaning us from the World with the Worm-wood of Afflictions; neither can many Waters of Affliction quench it, nor whole Floods drown it; but rather, being caſt upon it, do (like the Water in the Forge) add much Heat to this holy Affection. 3. Fear under God's viſiting Hand recovers that Life which it loſt in the Time of

of Prosperity and Ease. 4. Our Humility is encreased: For Afflictions are as a true Glass, wherein we see our own Vileness and Unworthiness, Frailty and Infirmities; and so humbly throw down ourselves with all Lowliness before GOD's Almightiness, and glorious Wisdom. 5. Patience is the very Nurse-child of Tribulation. It groweth under the Burden, and by Variety of Crosses. *Job* was an unparallelled Pattern for Afflictions, and so a matchless Mirror for Patience. And therefore the Church confesses, *that it is good for a Man, that he bear the Yoke in his Youth*, Lament. iii. 27. Proportionably spiritual Joy, Peace of Conscience, and other such sacred Perfumes, are enlightened and refreshed with the Fire of Affliction. And, 6. Repentance is much furthered by Afflictions. First, Repentance for old Sins is revived and renewed thereby; as you may see, *Job* xiii. 26. *Dan.* iv. *Ezr.* ix. 6. *Nehem.* ix. 6. and in other Parts of Scripture: And, Secondly, that for present Sins is enlarged. For upon serious Search, we may find out some special Sins, which we never took much to Heart before.

KNOW for this Purpose, that it is not enough when we are pressed with Afflictions, to look with Sorrow upon our Iniquities in general, as the Causes of them, but also upon such Occasion to search out some special Sins, which may at that Time move GOD principally to afflict us. And for Direction herein, let us by the Way take Notice of some Rules to know when the LORD correcteth a particular Sin. They are such as these:

1. WHEN upon Examination we find that in the Scriptures such a Punishment is denounced against such a Sin. As when Affiance in the Arm of

of Fleſh is puniſhed with its Failing to help us; or Pride, with Dejection and Contempt.

2. When God puniſheth by Way of Retaliation, or Like for Like; as, when we having diſhonoured Him with ſcandalous Sins, He caſts Diſhonour upon us; when we having been diſobedient to our Parents, our Children neglect their Duties towards us; and having wronged our Inferiors, our Superiors oppreſs us; or having been laviſh of our Tongues againſt Others, are paid Home with the Scourge of Tongues.

3. When we are taken in the very Act, and ſeized upon when we are Sinning. So *Jonas* flying, was followed with a Tempeſt. The *Iſraelites* murmuring for Fleſh, were plagued with the Wrath of God, while it was yet between their Teeth, *Num.* xi. 33. So *Jeroboam*'s Hand ſtretched out againſt the Prophet, dried up, 1 *Kings* xiii. 4. A Flax-woman at *Kinſtat* in *France*, dreſſing her Flax upon the Sabbath, was burnt with her Flax and two Children. At *Paris-garden* at a Bear-baiting, *Anno* 1583, eight Perſons were ſlain, and many hurt, by the breaking of a Scaffold.

4. When our Sin in its own Nature brings forth ſuch a Puniſhment, as a curſed Fruit. So Idleneſs, or Waſtfulneſs begets Want: Drunkenneſs, Dropſies, or ſome painful Diſtempers: The Sin of Uncleanneſs, Weakneſs and filthy Diſeaſes.

5. That which thou art loatheſt to hear of, and that which moſt hinders the Reſignation and Submiſſion of thy Soul and Body, to the Will of God.

6. That which thou firſt feeleſt the Smart of, that which thy Conſcience chiefly checks thee for, and

and seizeth upon, of its own Accord, as the only *Achan* and Author of thy present Misery. So *Joseph*'s Brethren in their present Troubles call to Mind their past Cruelty towards their Brother.

MOREOVER new Obedience also is quickned and inlarged by Afflictions: For you must know, that by them, that fundamental Principle of Christianity, *To forsake all, and deny ourselves*, the sure Ground-Work of all sincere and acceptable Obedience, is better learned and more boldly practised. Let a Man never talk of being a Christian, except he be content for *Christ's* Sake to deny himself, his worldly Wisdom, Passions, Pleasures, Friends, Ease, Estate, Liberty, and even his Life, and constantly endure the Hate and Oppositions, though of deerest Friends; the Reproaches and Revilings of Men. Now sanctified Crosses are wont to add Resolution to Self-Denial, for in them we see and find by Experience, that no created Power can comfort us; and therefore we are readier to resign up ourselves, renouncing the Arm of Flesh unto the Rock of Eternity.

THUS far of the Ends for which GOD afflicts his People: I shall in the next Place take Notice of *Jehoshaphat*'s Carriage in the great Distress he was brought into, by Means of his Enemies: *He feared and set himself to seek the* LORD. Whence we should learn, in all our Distresses and Dangers, if we would be rid out of them, to renounce our Sins, the true Cause of all our Crosses, and have Recourse to GOD: For He hath ever the principal Hand, and the greatest Sway in all Manner of Visitations and Vexations for Sin. Therefore Recovery from our Troubles, depends altogether upon our Recourse and Reconcilement to Him.

I NOW

I NOW proceed in the Third Place to consider the particular Means, which *Jehoshaphat* here singles out, and sets upon, for prevailing with GOD for Deliverance out of his Danger; which is, *Fasting* and *Prayer: He proclaimed a Fast throughout all Judah.*

THE Ordinary Prayers of GOD's People prevail much. As you may see *Acts* xii. 5. What Wonders then will extraordinary Prayer, edged with Fasting, work? Some Kind of Devils will not be cast out but by Prayer and Fasting, *Mat.* xvii. 21. that is, a most fervent Kind of Prayer sharpened with Fasting. Some Sins will not be so comfortably mastered, some fiery Darts repelled, some fierce Temptations conquered, some Blessings obtained, without this extraordinary Means; which, upon such Occasions sincerely undertaken, hath prevailed extraordinarily.

AND here, by the Way, observe, that an holy Fast is, *A religious Abstinence, undertaken upon some special Occasion; wherein we forbear not only Food, and other Comforts of this Life, but also bodily Labours, and worldly Business, so far as Mercy and Necessity will give leave; that we may thereby be extraordinarily humbled before* GOD, *and quickned with extraordinary Fervency of Prayer, for the Obtaining of our Suit at* GOD's *Hand.*

RELIGIOUS.] It is a solemn Exercise of Religion and Ordinance of GOD, injoined in the second Commandment; as it is a Means to help us in the Worship of GOD, and in the Duty of Prayer, upon any extraordinary Occasion; and in the fourth also; as the Time of Fast, is a Sabbath of Humiliation, wherein we are to profess our Humiliation, and testify our Repentance before GOD. The Morality of this Duty appears both in the old Tes-

tament: (For though the Circumſtances of the Time, and certain Habits and Geſtures, *Lev.* xvi. 29. and xxiii. 27, 29. *Zec.* vii. 5. and viii. 19. *Iſa.* lix. 5. 1 *Kings* xxi. 27. 2 *Sam.* xii. 20. *Eſth.* iv. 1, 3. *Ezr.* ix. 3. *Dan.* ix. 3. and x. 3, were temporary to the *Jews*; yet the Subſtance of the Faſt, which is the Humbling of our Souls by Abſtinence, is a moral Duty, belonging to all Nations, in all Ages:) And in the new alſo: See *Mat.* vi. 16. For preſcribing the Manner how to faſt, he preſuppoſeth the Duty that we are to faſt. He makes alſo a gracious Promiſe, *Verſe* 18. that our *Father which ſeeth in ſecret ſhall reward us openly.* Of this Matter more may be ſeen alſo *Mat.* ix. 14. and xvii. 21. *Luke* ii. 37. *Acts* xiii. 3. and xiv. 23. 2 *Cor.* xi. 27.

UPON *ſome ſpecial Occaſion.*] As; for the Obtaining of ſome ſpecial Good, for the Removing the Evil of Sin, for the Preventing of Affliction imminent, for Removing Affliction preſent; as, Famine, Sword, Captivity, Sickneſs, and Peſtilence.

WE muſt abſtain and forbear, from Food wholly, from Sleep in part, (as on ſuch a Day we muſt ſleep leſs, and riſe ſooner;) from Ornaments and better Attire, from matrimonial Benevolence, from bodily Labour and worldly Buſineſs, from all pleaſant and delightful Things.

AS *Mercy permitteth.*] Total Abſtinence from Meat and Drink is not ſo ſtrictly required; but in Caſe of real Weakneſs, a Man may refreſh himſelf.

IN this Duty of Faſting, we conſider, 1. The bodily outward Abſtinence. 2. The inward and ſpiritual Exerciſe. Of the Firſt we have ſpoken briefly

briefly before, and ſhall ſpeak more fully hereafter. The Second is an Humbling of ourſelves in a ſolemn Exerciſe of Prayer, joined with Repentance, furthered and teſtified by the outward Faſt. And herein Care muſt be taken, that Prayer be attended with, 1. Fervency of Deſire; and, 2. with Aſſurance of Faith: And, that Repentance have its two Parts; 1. Humiliation in Reſpect of Sins paſt; and, 2. An unfeigned Purpoſe of amending our Lives for the Time to come.

THIS may juſtly bring a great Deal of Confuſion, and Terror upon the Conſciences, and Shame upon the Faces of all thoſe, who know in their own Hearts, that they have no Acquaintance at all with this heavenly Exerciſe. And let every ſincere Chriſtian be quickened extraordinarily, and with ſingular Zeal to the Exerciſe of this Duty. Shall *Chriſt* faſt for us, and ſhall not we for ourſelves? Shall the *Phariſees* faſt twice a Week in Hypocriſy, and we not oftner in Sincerity? Can we willingly undertake any Diet or Abſtinence for our bodily Health, and ſhall we not now and then ſet a Day apart for the Welfare of our Souls? Can Worldlings faſt an whole Day for a good Market, and cannot Chriſtians abſtain from a Meal or two, to enjoy a more near Communion with GOD? Shall *Turks* faſt and cry mightily unto their curſed *Mahomet*; and ſhall not we humble ourſelves, to ſeek the Face of our deareſt Saviour? More eſpecially ſince the Benefit and profit which accrews unto the Chriſtian by this Duty, is ſingular and extraordinary many Ways.

FOR, 1. If we want publick or private Benefits; Faſting, joined with Prayer, is the Means whereby GOD will have them ſought and obtained. 2. If we are Danger of publick or perſonal Judgments;

This is the Way to divert them. By this Means *Eſther* ſaved her People from the Deſtruction deſigned them by *Haman*. Thus *Nineveh* was preſerved. And, 3. If we undertake any great Affair, publick or private, This is the Way to prepare and prevail. This Courſe did *Nehemiah* take, ch. i. 4. And *Ezra* to ſeek the right Way Home, ch. viii. 21. When *Paul* and *Barnabas* were ſeparated to the Miniſtry, the Prophets and Teachers faſted and pray'd, *Acts* xiii. 3. *Chriſt* Himſelf ſpent a whole Night in Faſting and Prayer, before He choſe his Diſciples, *Luke* vi. 12, 13.

Now we muſt make Conſcience of Faſting three Ways.

1. IN Secret. Sometimes a private Perſon alone is to ſet a Day apart for this Purpoſe, as we have Examples and Preſcriptions, 2 *Sam.* iii. 35.—xii. 16. *Nehem.* i. 4. *Eſth.* iv. 3. *Dan.* ix. 3. *Acts* ix. 9, 11. *Pſal.* xxxv. *Matt.* vi. 17. Private Chriſtians in all Times of the Church, may have many Occaſions to humble themſelves in ſecret; as, before they enter into any Office, Miniſtry, Magiſtracy, or into Marriage; in Times of Temptation, Deſertion, extraordinary Deadneſs of Heart; after Enſnarement in ſome ſecret Sin; Declination from our firſt Love; when we are followed with guilty Horror of one or more Sins, or haunted with furious Enticements to ſome new Sin, or frighted with ſome of *Satan*'s extraordinary fiery Darts; when a Man's Wife is in very long Travail; when a Child is dangerouſly ſick; before the Communion; and before the Baptizing of a Child.

2. IN Private. And that undertaken; 1. Either between Man and Wife; 1 *Cor.* vii. 5. to whom many Occaſions may be offer'd in this Kind; as, when they

they first enter upon the Government of a Family; to remove some Distempers, which hinder their peaceable and loving living together; for Children in Case of Barrenness; when the Wife draws near her Time of Delivery; when Children grow wicked, and are ensnared in ill Courses, or have taken up with lewd and wicked Companions. Or, 2. By the whole Family, *Zech.* xii. 12. In Time of some special Mortality amongst them; when any notorious Sin hath been committed by any of them; in Times of the Church's Misery; when some heavy Judgment lies upon the Land; or when some weighty Affair is on Foot; if at such Times publick Fasts be not proclaimed.

3. In Publick. The publick Fast is that, which being upon publick Cause, by publick Authority proclaimed before the Lord, is both publickly and privately to be sanctified of all, as a Sabbath of Humiliation unto the Lord. Such a Day is to be observed, and sanctified as a Sabbath of Humiliation; not only by outward Abstinence and Rest, but also by using the Means, and doing the Works of Sanctification, both publickly and privately; spending the whole Day (besides the publick Sanctification, and the Time which is to be spent in our Preparation before, and in our Meditation afterwards,) in the private Means of Sanctification; as, Reading, Meditation, Prayer; and in the private Works of Sanctification; as, the Duties of Repentance towards God, and the Works of Charity and Mercy towards our Brethren: Which Course soever a Man shall take in sanctifying a Fast unto the Lord, he shall be sure to obtain at the Hands of God, either that particular Request for which he is a Suitor, or that which is better; the Lord always Hearing his Children, thus suing

unto Him, and granting their Requeſts, as ſhall be moſt for his Glory, and their Good.

IN every one of theſe Faſts, whether Secret, Private, or Publick, we ought ſeriouſly, humbly, and unfeignedly to have Reſpect unto, make Conſcience of, and fruitfully practiſe. 1. The outward Abſtinence; and 2. The inward Exerciſe.

FOR the firſt, Outward Abſtinence; we ought to abſtain from our particular Calling, all Commodities, and all Comforts of this Life. We muſt abſtain:

1. FROM Food wholly. And yet this total Abſtinence from Meat and Drink is not ſo ſtrictly required, but that they, whoſe Health cannot bear it, may, in Caſe of real Neceſſity, take ſome little Refreſhing, leſt otherwiſe they hazard or hurt their Health, and unfit themſelves for ſpiritual Exerciſe. But here we muſt beware, that we uſe not this Liberty as an Occaſion to the Fleſh, pretending we cannot abſtain, when the Reaſon is, we will not. Though we have no Example of this Caſe propounded in Scripture, yet we have a ſufficient Ground for it, *Hoſ.* vi. 6. *Matt.* xii. 7. *I will have Mercy, rather than Sacrifice. To Faſt*, is not more than to ſacrifice; to ſuccour the Body, according to the Need thereof, is Mercy.

2. NOT only from Exerciſe, but we muſt alſo cut off ſome of our ordinary Sleep; (yet not ſo much, as that the Want thereof be an Hindrance to us in the Worſhip of GOD.) On ſuch a Day (as has been before obſerv'd) we muſt ſleep leſs and riſe ſooner, that ſo we may watch to Prayer.

FROM

3. FROM matrimonial Benevolence; from that Society which GOD hath ſanctified by his Word to married Perſons, 1 *Cor.* vii. 5. *Joel* ii. 16.

4. FROM bodily Labours and worldly Buſineſſes; according as it is preſcrib'd, *Joel* i. 14.—ii. 15. *Lev.* xvi. 29, 31.—xxiii. 32. For there is the ſame Reaſon of the extraordinary Sabbath of Humiliation, and of the ordinary. The Law of the weekly Sabbath is to be extended to other extraordinary Sabbaths: But on the weekly Sabbath we may do no Work; therefore not on this.

5. AND generally, from all the Pleaſures of this Life, *Joel* ii. 16. 1 *Cor.* vii. 5. So from all pleaſant and delightful Things. *David* and *Daniel* did not anoint themſelves at ſuch Times; as you may find, 2 *Sam.* xii. 20. *Dan.* x. 3. Whereupon (ſaith *Jerome*) *Faſting is to abſtain not only from Meats, but alſo from all Pleaſures.* And *Auſtin* thus: *The Scripture teacheth a general Faſt; not from the Concupiſcence of Meat only, but alſo from all Pleaſures of temporal Delights.*

THUS in a Word: We are not only to abridge our Taſte of Meats, but alſo to refrain our Eyes from beholding Pleaſures; our Ears from Hearing Mirth or Muſick; our Smelling from pleaſant Odours; our other Senſe from the lawful Uſe of the Marriage-Bed. For all theſe are quite contrary to Humiliation: And all theſe are to be done: 1. Partly, as Helps of our Humiliation, in renouncing the Hindrances thereof. 2. Partly, as Signs of our Humiliation, whereby we acknowledge ourſelves unworthy of theſe Delights. 3. Partly, as Evidences of our Repentance; in that by Way of godly Revenge (becauſe all our Senſes have ſinned) we deprive them of their ſeveral Delights.

AND

AND as we are to make our Senſes thus to faſt, ſo our Minds are not to meddle with any Recreations; which would not only hinder our Humiliation, but alſo diſtract us from better Meditations in ſanctifying the Faſt.

BY ſuch Abſtinences as theſe, we profeſs ourſelves unworthy of all the Benefits of this Life, and that we are worthy to be as far under the Earth, as we are above it; yea, that we are worthy to be caſt into the Bottom of Hell; which the holy Fathers, in Times paſt did ſignify, by putting Aſhes upon their Heads: The Truth whereof remaineth ſtill, tho' the Ceremony be not uſed. And ſo GOD's Children aforetime, at ſuch Times, confeſſed themſelves; 1. By Abſtinence from Meat and Drink, as unworthy ſo much as of a Crumb of Bread, or Drop of Water. 2. By putting on Sackcloth, unworthy the worſt Rag to cover their Shame with. 3. By abſtaining from matrimonial Fellowſhip, unworthy of any Poſterity or Remembrance on the Earth. 4. By ſhortning their ordinary Sleep, unworthy of any Reſt. And 5. By Duſt and Aſhes, worthy to be as far under the Ground, as they were above it.

THE uſual Time of a Faſt, is the Space of a natural Day; that is from Even to Even, or from Supper to Supper. For as it was the Time appointed for the ordinary Sabbath, ſo alſo for the extraordinary. *From Even to Even ſhall you ſanctify your Sabbath.* See *Lev.* xxiii. 32. *Judges* xx. 26. 2 *Sam.* i. 12. *Joſh.* vii. 6. 2 *Sam* iii. 33. But the Children of GOD when they have been preſſed with more urgent Occaſion, have ſometimes continued this Exerciſe for ſeveral Days together: See *Eſth.* iv. 16, 17. *Acts* ix. 9. 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 13. *Dan.* x. 2, 3.

WHEN

When the Faſt is continued for ſeveral Days together, upon ſome great Occaſion; (as, when a Man of great Uſe is ſtruck with a dangerous Sickneſs and lies betwixt Hope and Fear; when a Man's Wife lies longer than ordinary in Labour; when his Child his ſick; when a City is beſieged; or on ſome ſuch Occaſion; the Iſſue being uncertain, the Friends of ſuch ſick Perſons, earneſtly deſirous of their Life, or the Citizens of ſuch City longing for the Welfare thereof, continue to faſt and pray every Day, till they ſee what Iſſue the Lord will give:) a Man is not able to forbear all Manner of Suſtenance all the Time; and then he may take ſome Nouriſhment in the Days of his Faſt; which may be one Meal every Day in the Evening. In ſuch a Caſe we ſhould even at thoſe Times content ourſelves with a ſpare Diet, in Reſpect of the Quantity; and mean, in Reſpect of the Quality; according to the Example of *Daniel*, Chap. x. 3. But when our Faſt is once diſſolved, whether it be at the End of one Day or of more, we may freely uſe our ordinary Diet, obſerving always the Rules of Temperance and Sobriety.

But let me here obſerve to you, that the laſt Meal which is taken before a Faſt, ought to be very moderate and ſparing: So moderate, as that, ſo ſoon as it is taken, we may without Heavineſs, Drowſineſs and Dulneſs, ſet ourſelves to Examination, Meditation, Conference, Reading, Prayer, and ſuch like religious Exerciſes in private, as a Preparation unto the more ſolemn Exerciſes to be performed in a Faſt. Moſt meet it is, that this Preparation be in the Evening, and the Faſt then to begin. *From Even to Even* (ſaith the Law) *ſhall ye celebrate your Sabbath:* Meaning a Faſt. So that immediately after a ſpare Supper, all ſervile Works of our Calling being laid aſide, the forenamed Preparation

ration is to begin, and continue ſo long, as we can conveniently ſit up, even longer, and later than on other Days, we uſe to go Bed. Then after ſome Sleep taken, the next Morning, riſing ſooner than ordinarily we uſe to do, after ſome Renewing of our Preparation, the reſt of the Time, even till the four and twenty Hours, from the Beginning of our Evening Preparation, be ended, is to be ſpent in the ſolemn Exerciſes of Religion appertaining to a Faſt. If a Faſt be continued (as hath been before ſet down) two whole Days, it is as much as our weak Nature can well endure, without impairing the Health and Strength of our Body.

IN the Primitive Church I find, that in the Beginning, they faſted till Six o'Clock in the Afternoon, or till Sun-ſetting, which in common Eſtimation is about Six o'Clock. For that is the moſt indifferent Time to meaſure the Evening by, and the moſt proportionable to the whole Year, and moſt anſwerable to the Cuſtom of GOD's People in the Old Teſtament: And therefore the moſt equal Time to meaſure the End of the Day, and the Sun-ſetting by, for all the Year, is Six o'Clock. And that I take to have been the uſual Time, when both the *Jews* and the ancient Chriſtians did break off their Faſts.

THUS much concerning outward Abſtinence. Now follows the ſecond Thing that we ought to have Reſpect unto in Days of Humiliation and Faſting; Namely, the inward ſpiritual Exerciſe. And herein let us take Notice, and fruitfully perform theſe following Particulars, all which concern the Duty of Humiliation:

FIRST,

First, Let us exerciſe our Souls ſeriouſly in a right Survey, and full Comprehenſion of all our Vileneſs, Iniquities, Tranſgreſſions and Sins; this whole Body of Death that encompaſſeth us; that bloody Guiltineſs we incurred by *Adam*'s Fall. 2. Let us get a right Apprehenſion of God's dreadful Wrath and flaming Vengeance againſt Sin. 3. A feeling Senſe of our own unſpeakable, unconceivable Miſery by Reaſon thereof. 4. A vile and baſe Eſteem of ourſelves, abhorring ourſelves in Duſt and Aſhes. 5. An inward Sorrow, Renting of the Heart, and Bleeding of the Soul. 6. Let us outwardly bewail, with a plentiful and heart-piercing Confeſſion, all our Sins before God. 7. Let us acquire a reſolute Hatred, Diſlike and Averſion; 8. An impregnable Reſolution; 9. A conſtant Endeavour and watchful Oppoſition, againſt all Sin. And, 10. An hearty Grieving that we cannot perform all theſe more heartily and ſincerely.

Now for the Quickning of our Hearts with a more feeling and fruitful Exerciſe in theſe ſeveral Points, conſider ſuch Means and Motives as theſe:

1. To help us in the Firſt, Let us keep in a Readineſs and often Exerciſe ſome ſpecial Ways of Summing up the Number, and taking a right Eſtimate of the Nature and Notoriouſneſs of our Sins. 1. By Inſpection into the pure Chryſtal of God's righteous Law with a clear, impartial Eye. 2. By a thorough Peruſal of ourſelves from Top to Toe, as it were; I mean, all thoſe Sins which are any Way incident to any Part, or Power or Paſſage of Body, Spirit, Soul or Calling. 3. By often Recounting with ourſelves all the Omiſſions and Tranſgreſſions of all thoſe Duties, which we owe unto Others, by Reaſon of thoſe Relations, which we hold unto them: As for Inſtance, A Maſter of a Family,

mily, hath the first Relation to GOD, as his Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier: Then to his Wife, to his Family, to his Neighbours, to his Kindred, to his Pastor, to Strangers, to the King and all inferior Magistrates, to those that are without, and to GOD's People. 4. By a diligent Revising of our two Catalogues of Sins: I mean of our unregenerate Time, and since our Conversion.

IN Case of Barrenness in this Discovery, and when we begin to please ourselves, in that we find not so many notorious Sins in our Lives before Conversion, or such scandalous Relapses since, as we may see in others; let us fall upon some special Points for quickning our Hearts, and with a serious Search insist upon: 1. That Original Sink, and inbred Inclination to Sin, naturally inherent in our Bowels; as, to Athiesm, Killing of *Christ*, Despairing of GOD's Mercy, and such like. 2. The Circumstances of our old Sins, which may make a little Sin to be exceeding great and heinous, and to exceed the Sins of Others; which it may be for their outward Act, were more notorious. 3. The innumerable Infirmities, Wants, and Wandrings, that cleave unto our best Performances. 4. How many Ways we may be guilty of, or accessary to other Men's Sins. 5. The many crying and horrible Sins of the Time. (Holy *David* fetched much Matter of Mourning from this Fountain, as you may see, *Psa.* cxix. 136.) And, 6. Let us especially examine ourselves by the First and Last Commandments; for the First forbids the first Motions of our Hearts against GOD: And the Last forbids the first Motions of our Hearts against our Neighbour, tho' there be no Consent to do the Evil, which we think.

THE first main Duty then to be performed, is Examination. When any needful Blessing is withheld

held, or withdrawn, or any Judgment to be prevented or removed, it is very requiſite to ſearch, whether there be not ſome ſpecial Sin in us, which may damp or diſannull our Prayers. *If I regard Iniquity in my Heart, the* LORD *will not hear me*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*. That which the LORD ſaid of the Army of *Iſrael* in *Joſhua*'s Time, may be apply'd to particular Perſons; namely, that if they did not ſearch and find out, and take away the accurſed Thing, the LORD would not be with them any more, *Joſh.* vii. 11, 12. This the Saints well knew, and therefore were wont, in the Days of their Faſt, to enter into a ſolemn Examination of their own, and of others Sins; as may be ſeen, *Ezra* ix. 6. *Neh.* ix. 16.

FOR this firſt Part of the inward ſpiritual Exerciſe, I mentioned divers Ways of ſumming up the Number, and taking a right Eſtimate, of the Nature and Notoriouſneſs of our Sins:

1. BY Inſpection into the pure Chryſtal of GOD's righteous Law with a clear and impartial Eye. To this Purpoſe collect an exact Catalogue of all Ways of Sinning, out of the beſt Expounders of the Commandments.

IN this Way of Examination, begin with *Adam*'s Sin: which, in Reſpect of us, Divines call Original Sin imputed; And if we had no inherent Sin of our own, this imputed Sin were enough to damn us. Our firſt Sin is the Participation both of *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion and Guiltineſs; 1. Whereby in his Sin all his Poſterity ſinned, *Rom.* v. 12, 19. The Reaſon is, *Adam* was not then a private Man, but repreſented all Mankind. When *Adam* offended, his Poſterity was in his Loins; and there-

fore take Part of the Guiltineſs with him, even as *Levi* paid Tythes in *Abraham*, *Heb.* vii. 9, 10.

OUT of the former Tranſgreſſion ariſeth another, which I call, Original Sin inherent; which is, Corruption ingendered in our firſt Conception; whereby every Part and Faculty of Soul and Body, is impoiſoned with Proneneſs and Diſpoſition to Evil. See *Pſa.* li. 5. *Gen.* vi. 5. *Tit.* iii. 3. *Heb.* xii. 1. Or thus:

THIS Original Sin is that natural Corruption, which is come into the World by the Apoſtacy of our firſt Parents, derived from them by natural Propagation into all Mankind, infecting all Parts of Men; ſo as before Grace and Regeneration, a Man hath no Strength to move or incline to any Good, but to Evil only; and therefore alſo he is ſubject to the firſt and ſecond Death, 'till he be freed by Grace and Faith in *Jeſus Chriſt*. It is come in the Place of Original Righteouſneſs, and ſo is a Privation of that, and alſo an evil Habit in the Soul.

ALL *Adam*'s Poſterity are equally Partakers of this Corruption. The Reaſon why it ſheweth not itſelf equally in all, is becauſe, 1. Some have the Spirit of Sanctification. 2. Some the Spirit only to bridle Corruption. 3. Some have neither. And, 4. in ſome, GOD ſtirs up the Principles of Nature; whence it is, many do ſhine in excellent moral Virtues.

LET us take Motives to humble our Souls under the Senſe of this inherent Original Pollution, and Body of Death, from ſuch Conſiderations as theſe:

CON-

CONSIDER, 1. The prime Excellency, Sweetneſs and Peace of our Souls, of which this is a Privation. 2. The Univerſality of Corruption, in Reſpect both to the Subject and Object. Mark but the infinite Omiſſions of the Eye, which ſhould, eſpecially on the LORD's Day, like a Bee upon a Variety of Flowers, from every Creature it looks upon, collect Matter of heavenly Meditation, for magnifying the Creator; and how every Glance thereof brings ſome Matter of Luſt or Sin, one Way or other, into the Heart. 3. Conſider the vaſt and horrible Degeneration from the Law of Nature, it draws unto; ſuch as the vile Idolatry of the *Virginians*, who worſhip the Devil. The horrid Deed of that Monſter of *Millan*, who (as *Bodin* reporteth) when he had ſurprized on the ſudden, one whom he mortally hated, he preſently overthrew him; and ſetting his Dagger to his Breaſt, told him; He would certainly have his Blood, except he would abjure, and blaſpheme the GOD of Heaven. Which when that fearful Man, greedy of a miſerable Life, had done in a moſt horrible Manner, he immediately diſpatched him, as ſoon as the Blaſphemies were out of his Mouth; and in a bloody Triumph added: *This is heroical Revenge, which doth not only deprive the Body of Life, but brings the never-dying Soul unto everlaſting Flames.* Witneſs alſo *Mahomet* the Great, who (as the Story reports) was in his Time the Death of eight hundred thouſand Men. Witneſs that Man, with whom Mr. *Cartwright* converſed on his deſpairing Bed; who anſwered him, *That ſince he was to go to Hell himſelf, he would have his Wife, Children, and all the World damned with him.* 4. Conſider the extreme Difficulty to weaken and waſte this Body of Sin. How many an holy Man ſtrives mightily, and wreſtles many a Year with ſome Paſſion, and yet cannot maſter it under a long Time. Some-

times a ſincere Man ſets himſelf againſt Anger, labouring throughly to mortify it, perhaps for ten or twenty Years; and yet after all that Time, and for all the Pains and Meansus'd againſt it, he is ſometimes upon the ſudden ſurpriſed and foiled with it. And did not GOD accept in *Jeſus Chriſt* our Striving, Grieving, and Hating that Sin, we are ſo halled to againſt our Wills, and the hearty Deſire of our Souls, how could we have any Comfort?

AFTER original Sin, actual Sin comes into Conſideration, which is, that which a Man doth commit, from that Time wherein he knows to exerciſe his Reaſon. And it is either a Thought, Word or Work, contrary to GOD's Law; or an Omiſſion of a Thought, Word or Work, commanded in that Law. Or, in a Word, (ἀνομία) a Tranſgreſſion of the Law, 1 *John* iii. 4.

TAKE Motives to abominate and abandon from the H..rt, and to the Bottom of Hell, all thy ac-t.. ..ins, from ſuch Conſiderations as theſe:

CONSIDER, 1. That Sin is infinitely hateful. It is the only Object both of GOD's infinite Hatred and Anger. His Love is carry'd upon Variety of Objects: He loves his own *bleſſed-ſelf* infinitely; his own Son, which is called, *The Son of his Love*, his Angels, his Children, his Creatures. But all his infinite Hatred doth, with all its Force and Deteſtation, light upon Sin. Suppoſe an idle Word, vain Thought, or officious Lie paſs from thee, the leaſt of all theſe is accompanied with GOD's infinite Hatred, and Indignation. 2. It is fouler than the Devil himſelf. If any of you ſhould have the Devil appear to him in his fouleſt Shape, he would be ſtrangely affrighted. The leaſt Sin thou

thou committeſt, I ſay, is far more loathſome, vile, and odious than the fouleſt Fiend in Hell. 3. It is moſt infectious. It hath a peſtilential Property, that ſpreads infinitely, and pollutes every Thing it comes near. It is therefore compar'd in Scripture, to Things of the moſt diffuſive Nature. The firſt Sin hath polluted all the Sons and Daughers of *Adam* that were ever ſince, or ſhall be; it made the whole Creation ſubject to Vanity. And if but one Sin lye lurking in a Man's Heart unrepented of, it ſours and impoiſons all his Thoughts, Affections, Words and Actions, and that of all Sorts, natural, civil and religious. It infects all that is in him, or comes from him, or that is about him. 4. That it is full of all fearful Effects and curſed Conſequences; bringing upon us the worſtof Evils, both Privative and Poſitive. As for privative Evils: It deprives us of GOD's Favours; of our Portion in the Blood of *Chriſt* (if the Sin be committed with Delight;) one Drop whereof is incomparably more worth, than Heaven and Earth, Men and Angels; Of the fatherly Protection, Care and Providence of the bleſſed Trinity; the glorious Guard of Angels; the comfortable Communion of the bleſſed Saints, and all the Contentments that follow thence; of the Joy and Tranquillity of a good Conſcience, a Jewel far more worth than the whole World; and of all the heavenly Illuminations and Comforts, wherewith the Holy Ghoſt is wont to refreſh the Hearts of holy Men. And laſtly, of a Crown of Life, and the unſpeakable and endleſs Joys of Heaven. Then for poſitive Evils; it brings upon us infinite Sorrows, Plagues, Miſeries, and moſt fearful Judgments, Blindneſs of Mind, Hardneſs of Heart, Deadneſs of Spirit, a reprobate Senſe, Horror of Conſcience, Anguiſh of Soul, Bondage under *Satan*, Baniſhment from GOD, and Miſchiefs

more than either Tongue can tell, or Heart can think.

AGAIN conſider that Sin can never be purged, but by the Heart-Blood of *Chriſt*; and that ſo many Sins as thou commiteſt willingly, ſo many Thorns doſt thou faſten upon his Head; ſo many Nails doſt thou drive into his Hands and Feet; ſo many Spears doſt thou thruſt into his Heart; ſo oft (Mercileſs Villain! let me ſpeak ſo, for the Love of my dear Redeemer!) doſt thou imbrew thy wicked Hands with his precious Blood, and with prodigious Prophaneneſs trample it under thy Feet. So that it may juſtly be ſaid unto thee, as *Peter* ſaid to the *Jews*, *Thou haſt crucified the* LORD *of Life*; *thou haſt murdered the King of Glory, the Son of the everlaſting* GOD, Chriſt Jeſus, *that Juſt and Holy One*; and preferred, not *Barabbas*, but thine own ſinful Luſts, nay, the *Devil* himſelf, before our bleſſed Redeemer.

LET theſe and the like Conſiderations ſerve to aggravate our actual Sins, and ſo move us to ſuffer our Hearts to be wounded and broken in Pieces for them. Proceed now, and peruſe ſeriouſly the ſoundeſt Expoſition upon the Commandments; and lay thy Life to this holy Rule and Line. To give an Entrance into this;

LET us conſider, 1. How we have villainouſly ſtruck at the pure Eye of GOD, the Father's Glory all our Life long, with many filthy Thoughts, abominable Luſts and fearful Provocations: How we have ſhamefully abuſed the Riches of his Goodneſs, Forbearance and Long-ſuffering, which ſhould have led us to Repentance: How cruelly we have neglected ſo great a Salvation, by not offering ourſelves

ſelves to his gracious Embracements, ſtretching out his Arms unto us ever ſince we were born.

2. How fearfully we have diſhonoured his dear Son, by deſpiſing Him in his Miniſtry, perſecuting Him in his Members, and ſhedding his Blood in the Sacrament.

3. WHAT execrable Indignity we have offered to the bleſſed Spirit of GOD, by grieving, quenching, if not deſpiting Him, by accurſedly rejecting his many holy Motions, or ſmothering them by Worldlineſs, Luſt, or ſome ſenſual Rebellion; by withſtanding that Light, which ſtood againſt us like an armed Man, when we went about Sin; nay, and it may be, by ſcoffing at Religion; (Horrible Villainy!) and railing againſt Purity, and the Ways of GOD.

4. How wretchedly we have wronged thoſe heavenly Creatures, the Angels of GOD, by robing them a long Time of that Joy they would have conceived at our Converſion, *Luke* xv. 7. By making Choice of the damned Fiends (who continually roared about us, like ſo many greedy Lions to ſwallow us up quick, 1 *Pet.* v. 8.) to be our Attendants, whereas the other bleſſed and glorious Spirits tendered their Attendance and would gladly have been our Guardians.

5. How we have unworthily abuſed all the Creatures, by adding, ſo much as in us lies, Burden unto their Bondage, and Grievouſneſs unto the Groans, which they make for Deliverance out of that Vanity, to which our Sins have made them ſubject; and by Want of Conſcience and Care to have them ſanctified unto us by the Word and Prayer.

7. How

6. How we have abuſed many ſeaſonable Afflictions and Viſitations laid upon us, for our Good.

7. How abominably we have abandoned our Bodies to ſerve *Satan*; and all the Parts and Members thereof, as Inſtruments of Unrighteouſneſs to Sin:

OUR Eyes to wicked Wandring, Wantonneſs, Adulteries, Covetouſneſs and idle Gazings. They ought all the Days of our Life, to have gathered from the Creatures, and all the Works of GOD, Abundance of ſweet Matter for divine Meditation upon the Goodneſs, Greatneſs, Excellency and Perfections of our bleſſed Creator. But they have wickedly ſerved us, as Windows ſet wide open to let in a World of Wild-Fire to enflame our already naughty Hearts, with Luſt, ſpeculative Filth, and many vicious and vile Affections.

OUR Ears to delight in idle Talk, nay filthy Jeſts, ſlandrous Reports, and other unſavoury Communication. They might have ſerved to have done GOD a great Deal of Service: All which we heard, ſhould have fallen through our Ears into our Hearts, as Seed of Prayer or Praiſe, or ſome other profitable Employment of ſome holy Affection; but in many Companies they have drank in, falſe Accuſations, Slanders and Whiſperings, as Matter of unneceſſary Suſpicions, Ill-Will, and Heart-burning, if not Revenge.

OUR Tongues, *to ſet on Fire the Courſe of Nature:* Beſides a World of other Iniquity, to blaſpheme (prodigious Villany!) the glorious Name of the mighty LORD of Heaven and Earth; and to wound the good Name of others. Here then punctually peruſe with a broken Heart and bleeding Affections, thoſe many Kinds of the Sins of the Tongue, whereof every one of us, no Doubt, at one Time or other, have been deeply guilty.

1. Blaſ-

1. Blaſphemy.
2. Murmuring.
3. Defence of Sin.
4. Perjury and Swearing.
5. Lying, Equivocation and mental Reſerving.
6. Slandering, Tale-telling and raiſing of Rumours.
7. Flattery and Double-tonguedneſs.
8. Curſing, Railing and Reviling.
9. Brawling and Scolding.
10. Scoffing, Mocking, Deriding, Scurrility and fooliſh Jeſting.
11. Giving ill Council.
12. Sowing Seeds of Diſcord among Neighbours.
13. Boaſting, Loquacity and Talkativeneſs.
14. Diſcovering of Secrets.
15. Haſty and undiſcreet Threatning.
16. Raſh Promiſes and Vows.
17. Idle Words and filthy Talking.
18. Sinful Silence.
19. Raſh Cenſuring, malicious Informing and Whiſpering.

THUS go on; and more particularly and exactly ſurvey the ſeveral Sins of every other Part.

8. CONSIDER how wofully we have wronged (which is worſt of all) our own poor, immortal Souls, by miſ-employing all the Powers and Faculties thereof to ſerve *Satan* and ourſelves, by faſtning upon them, with ſelf-damning Cruelty ſo many mortal Wounds, that without bathing in the bloody Wounds of *Jeſus Chriſt*, will bleed to everlaſting Death.

OUR Minds might very well have been by this Time, as full as the Moon, with ſpiritual Underſtanding in the Myſtery of *Chriſt*, and plentifully enriched with much ſaving Knowledge: But a long Time, they lay in the darkeſt Midnight of Ignorance, in Reſpect of any ſuch ſacred Skill, and gave us Light only to do Ill, and grow wiſe in Wickedneſs. Nay, and ſince they have been ſomething enlightened, we have been extremely

ſlothful in furniſhing them with that Excellence, and Variety of Knowledge, which if we had improved all Means, and bleſſed Opportunities, they might have happily attained.

OUR Memories might have been rich and royal Treaſuries of many ſpiritual and divine Leſſons, comfortable Cordials, holy Experiences, heavenly Pearls; but in our vain Days we filled them full of impertinent Stuff, idle Jeſts, fooliſh Conceits, unnumbred Notions of Vanity and Folly: Nay, and ſince they were in ſome Meaſure ſanctified, we have found in them, which is a grievous Thing, more Aptneſs and Strength to receive and keep Matters of this World, than Affairs of Heaven, and the moſt material Concernments of our own Souls.

OUR Hearts, whoſe only Object ſhould have been Things honeſt, juſt, pure, lovely, and of good Report, have been impoiſoned, reſtleſs Fountains of all Ill, the Source and Nurſeries of innumerable vain, and vile Thoughts and Affections: In Regard of malicious Thoughts, very Slaughter-Houſes; in Regard of unclean Luſts, very Stews; in Regard of the Heat of boiling Concupiſcence, as the Prophet ſpeaks, like *a Baker's Oven*. Nay, and ſince they have been Habitations of the Holy Ghoſt, we may be ſore aſhamed to conſider the Want of Watchfulneſs, Purity, and Heavenly-Mindedneſs, which ought to have attended ſuch a glorious Gueſt; and which is yet more, the Aſſaults of Luſt, Paſſion, and many loathſome Intruſions of moſt unworthy Thoughts.

ALL our Affections have been moſt notorious and ſtirring Agents for the Devil. Every one tranſported in every Thing the wrong Way.

OUR

OUR Sorrow, which ſhould have wholly been ſpent upon Sin, hath been miſpent upon earthly Loſſes, about Things of this Life, and when we have been croſſed in our ſenſual Deſires, which are no fit Matter for Mourning. Nay, whereas ſince Converſion, that Commandment lies upon us, *Rejoice evermore*, 1 *Theſ.* v. 16. We have baſely ſuffered our Hearts to be unneceſſarily dejected with falſe Fears and Diſtruſts.

OUR Joy ſhould have been in JEHOVAH, bleſſed for ever, in his Name, his Word, his Works, and Ways: It ſhould have been exerciſed upon everlaſting heavenly Objects, which would have enlarged it, to that which is unſpeakable and glorious. The Matter of it ſhould have been; 1. GOD through our LORD *Jeſus Chriſt*. 2. Our own Salvation. 3. The Proſperity of the Church. 4. The Sufferings with *Chriſt*. 4. All the Gifts of GOD. But in all our ſinful and ſenſual Time, it was unhappily ſpent upon Froth and Folly; at the beſt, upon Corn, and Wine, and Oil, Things fading and tranſitory; ſo that in the Heat, and Heighth of it, we might truly have ſaid of it, as *Solomon* of Laughter, *It is mad.* Nay, ſince we have been tranſlated into GOD's marvellous Light, we have ſinned in ſuffering it to be damp'd upon the Approach of any little Trouble, and in not exerciſing and enlarging it with more Exaltation, Sweetneſs and Refreſhing about the Things of GOD, and Aſſurance of our Salvation.

OUR Love, which ſhould have warmed our Hearts with an holy Flame towards GOD, (who, of his own free Mercy, hath ſealed unto us, by the Blood of his Son, all the Prerogatives of the Saints upon Earth, and the bleſſed Inheritance of the everlaſting Kingdom of Heaven; a Senſe of which

which ſhould make us to prefer his Glory before Life itſelf;) in our wicked Days was wholly imployed in providing ſenſually for ourſelves. And even ſince, by the mighty Working of *Chriſt*'s Spirit, we have, in ſome Meaſure, ſet our Love aright, we cannot, without a great Deal of Grief and Shame, think upon the Faintneſs, Inconſtancy and Coldneſs of it towards GOD, *Chriſt*, his Word, Works, Creatures, Sacraments, Sabbaths, Miniſters, Services, Children, Preſence, Corrections, and Coming.

OUR Hatred, which all ſhould have been ſpent upon Sin, hath been bent againſt the beſt Things in the World; even againſt Holineſs itſelf, as tho' it were Hypocriſy; againſt Godlineſs, as though it were *a Sect*; againſt GOD's faithful Miniſters, as tho' they were the Troublers of the State, Meſſengers of evil Things, and our Enemies.

OUR Conſciences which ſhould have been Regiſters and Remembrancers unto us of many heavenly Thoughts, gracious Speeches, godly Actions, ſanctified Sabbaths, holy Prayers, divine Meditations, Chriſtian Conferences, Days of Humiliation, righteous Dealing with our Brethren, Works of Juſtice, Mercy and Truth, a ſincere Reſpect to all GOD's Commandments, a careful Performance of all ſpiritual Duties, a ſeaſonable Exerciſe of every Grace, Hatred of all falſe Ways, and hearty and invincible Love unto GOD, and all Things that He loves: In ſtead of ſuch comfortable Proviſion againſt the evil Day, naturally we hoard up in them, Scourges, Stings and Scorpions, infinite Matter of unſpeakable Horror,; I mean, Conſciouſneſs of many Villainies, Vanities, and Lies, Oaths, Whoredoms, Revellings, Matches, Falſhoods, Idle Talk, Scoffs, and Railings. Now all

theſe,

theſe, except by timely Repentance we confeſs and forſake them, lurk in the Boſom of our guilty Conſciences, like ſo many ſleeping Lions, gathering helliſh Poiſon and Power, that hereafter they may ſting with everlaſting Horror and endleſs Torment.

3. LET us diligently reviſe our whole Life, and carefully peruſe our two Catalogues of Sin; I mean thoſe of our unregenerate Time, and thoſe committed ſince our Converſion: Such are, 1. All the Abominations of the Days of our Vanity. 2. Our Failings in our Tranſlation from Darkneſs to Light. 3 Our Relapſes, Falls and Frailties ſince.

To prepare our Hearts with quickning Matter for penitent Remorſe and ſound Humiliation; for the firſt of theſe; let us take Notice of,

1. OUR Omiſſions in that graceleſs Time, which were as large as the Duties enjoined in GOD's bleſſed Laws. Now what grievous Amazements may it breed in a truly penitent Heart, to think ſeriouſly, that for all the Time of our Unregeneration, which perhaps was twenty or thirty Years, having ſo great and good a GOD in Heaven, we yet for all that Time, ſhould do Him no Service at all, neither perform any Duty unto Him (or but ſo, that it was abominable in his Sight) of all thoſe which he required in his bleſſed Book; and we did infinitely owe, being his Creatures, and bound unto Him beſides by infinite Obligations, every Moment. For Inſtance: we may now acknowledge by the preſent Sweetneſs, and Precioufneſs of the Spirit of Prayer, what an horrible Neglect it was of ſo long a Time, not to offer up any one acceptable Sacrifice in that Kind. We may conceive by our high Eſteeming the LORD's Day, by that ſweet Communion we

have at such Times with his holy Majesty, and *Jesus Christ*, through the secret Working of the blessed Spirit, and Exercise of Faith in the Ordinances, what accursed Caitiffs we were, and what an horrible Sin it was, to have continued wilfull Strangers to every Duty of such heavenly Days, so many Years together; nay, to have desperately prophaned them by Works of our Calling, Pastimes, or Idleness.

Go on thus, and aggravate all other Omissions. Omission of the Duties of Charity, Kindness and Love to the Brethren of *Christ*, without any more Sin, justly merits that dreadful Doom, *Matt.* xxv. 41. and is able of itself to damn thee forever.

2. ALL our actual Sins committed in Thought, Word, or Deed; seriously and sensibly searching out, with an impartial, eager Pursuit, their Heinousness and Number.

AND in this penitent Survey, let us consider, which Way the Current of our Thoughts have been principally carried; whether upon Lust, Ambition or Pride: Wherein principally our Words have been wickedly wasted; whether in Lying, Swearing, Slandering, filthy Talking or Jesting: What sinful Courses we have followed most; whether Drunkenness, Whoredom, Gaming, Sabbath-breaking, Revellings, or the like. Thus let us mark, wherein we have had our Hearts, Tongues and Hands deepest in Hell, and done *Satan* the most Service, that we may mourn proportionably and fortify ourselves for the Time to come, with answerable Watchfulness and Industry.

AGAIN, Let us divide that dark and damned Time into its Portions and Periods, according to the

the ſeveral Places, Conditions and Callings, wherein we have paſſed it: Thus, ſo much Time ſpent at Home in our Father's Houſe; ſo much in Service or Apprenticeſhip; ſo much at School; ſo much at the Univerſity; ſo much at the Inns of Court; ſo much in the Country; ſo much in ſingle Life; ſo much in the Marriage State; ſo much privately; ſo much in this or that Office; ſo much in this Town or Pariſh; ſo much in that: And let us well weigh the ſeveral Corruptions, Vices and ſinful Pleaſures, to which we were moſt given, in thoſe diſtinct Places, Times, Callings, and Conditions of Life; that ſo we may proceed in better Order to break our Hearts before GOD for them: Beginning with the firſt actual Sin, to which our now awaken'd Memory, and the Spirit of Repentance, can lead us. Nay, and to help us herein, let us both take from our Mothers or Nurſes, what they can report unto us of that Time, wherein we cannot remember ourſelves to have lived; and alſo conjecture from the froward Behaviour of other Infants, which we now obſerve, how untoward our own Carriage was at that Age. And then let us proceed to enumerate all the Circumſtances of our old Sins, to aggravate and make them as odious and loathſome in our Eyes as we can, for a more thorough Humbling of our Souls.

SUPPOSE in thy Time of Darkneſs, thou waſt a Drunkard, weigh well, beſides the beaſtly Sin of Drunkenneſs itſelf, ſuch Circumſtances as theſe; 1. How thou grievedſt thy Parents and Friends, (or Wife and Children, if thou livedſt in the married Eſtate.) 2. How thou didſt miſ-ſpend thy precious Time in Ale-houſes, the Nurſeries of the Devil, for one Moment whereof, any damn'd Soul in Hell would give ten Thouſand Worlds. 3. How thou metteſt there a Company of Sons of

Belial, thy *Brethren in Iniquity*, and madeſt them every Time, ſo much as in thee lay, more the Children of Hell than they were before. 4. How wickedly thou didſt waſte GOD's good Creatures, for which many Thouſands were ready to ſtarve. 5. How thou didſt curſedly caſt away that Money, by which thou mighteſt have maintained thy Family, provided for thy Children, and relieved the Poor. 6. How before you parted, thou didſt put thyſelf out of the Rank of Mankind, by turning Beaſt. 7. How you ſwore, blaſphemed GOD's Name, railed upon good Men; perhaps roared, and play'd the Bedlams. 8. That when towards Bed-time thou ſhouldſt have proſtrated thyſelf amidſt thy People, to have offer'd up an Evening Sacrifice of Prayers and Praiſe, thou laidſt all along like a filthy Hog, wallowing in thine own Vomit, offering up thy Body and Soul a curſed Sacrifice to the Devil.

AGAIN, let us conſider, How many we have, not only like Wolves undone, ſo much as in us lay, in their outward Eſtate; but even like Devils, drawn them to Hell, and held them faſt in a damn'd Eſtate: how many Ways we have been guilty of, or acceſſary to other Men's Sins; whether, 1. By commanding, as *David* did *Joab*; or 2. By Commending; 3. By Conſenting; 4. By Companying; 5. By Conniving; 6. By Counſelling; 7. By Defending; 8. By Encouraging; 9. By Provoking; or 10. By Participating with others in their Wickedneſs.

ABOVE all, let us ſpend much Time and many Tears in preſſing upon our Conſciences, the infinite Outrages, Exceſſes and Tyrannies of our Boſom Sin: For that reigned and raged in us far more than any of the Reſt. It was the Devil's Vice-roy,

roy, to keep in a damn'd Slavery, all the Faculties of the Soul, all the Thoughts of the Heart, the Heat of our Affections, the Strength of our Wit, for his more notorious Service. I know not, whether this ſometimes by Reaſon of its vile Nature, univerſal Domineering, and giving Life and Motion to a World of wicked Means, Ways and Circumſtances, it may not hold Scale againſt all our other Sins. And therefore we have the more Need of ſtricteſt Examination to diſcover it; of more Brokenneſs of Heart, to lament it; of *Chriſt*'s deareſt and warmeſt Blood to pardon it; and of the Holy Spirit's mightieſt Work to mortify and ſubdue it.

SECONDLY, In order to get Matter of Humiliation for the ſecond Kind of Sins, that is, our Failings in our Tranſlation from Darkneſs to Light; let us call to mind and conſider,

1. OUR Lothneſs to leave *Satan*'s Service, and to ſubmit to the Scepter of *Chriſt*; our extreme Cruelty, even to our own poor immortal Souls, in withſtanding, ſo much as in us lay, the very Work of Grace, and our everlaſting Good, the Miniſtry, Men, holy Motions, and all other Means, ſet on Foot by GOD's Spirit, to lead us out of Hell; our Liſtening, even when *Chriſt* called, to the ſubtle Suggeſtions and Cries of our own Corruptions, the Devil and our old Companions.

2. THE great Diſproportion between the notorious Wickedneſs of our former Life, and Bewailing it; between the Number of our Sins, and Fewneſs of our Tears; the Heinouſneſs of our Rebellions, and little Meaſure of our Humiliation. And what a freſh Spring of new penitent Sorrow may this create, to conſider that we have been far greater

Sinners than ſome others, yet have paſſed through the New-Birth with far leſs Trouble of Mind than they?

3. ALL the Diſhonours offered to the Free Grace of GOD, *Chriſt*'s invaluable Bloodſhed; and all the bleſſed Promiſes in GOD's Book; in that, on the one Hand, when we ſaw ourſelves coming out of the Hands of *Satan* and from his curſed Slavery, we hied no Faſter, nor made more Haſte out of that damn'd, deſperate Eſtate; and on the other Hand, in that, when we had *Jeſus Chriſt*, and all the glorious Pleaſures of his Kingdom ſo ſeaſonably revealed, and freely offered to us, we did not entertain and embrace them with more Eagerneſs and Joy, Quickneſs and Diſpatch.

4. FOURTHLY, Let us take Notice how infinitely we have been wanting in Thankfulneſs, for that moſt glorious Work of our Converſion; (a greater Work than the Making of the whole World) with infinite Mercy, with infinite Merit, with infinite Might. A ſerious Contemplation of the Greatneſs of this Benefit, is able to overwhelm the largeſt Capacity, Human or Angelical, with everlaſting Admiration. Oh! the Depth of the Goodneſs of GOD! If all the Hearts and Tongues of all the Men and Angels in Heaven and in Earth were induſtriouſly ſet on Work to extol and magnify this happy Change of ours, they would come infinitely ſhort of that which is deſerved.

THUS much ſhall ſuffice for the Diſcovery of the Abominations of the Days of our Vanity, and our Failings in our Tranſlation from Darkneſs to Light, to ſuggeſt unto us further Matter for our deeper Humiliation. It remains now, to ſay ſomewhat of the third and laſt Kind of Sins; that is, our

our Relapſes, Falls, and Frailties ſince we have been ſo tranſlated: And this will afford us (had we Time to unfold them) moſt ample Matter of Humiliation, above all the Reſt.

Now, in the Review of our Relapſes, and Falls, and Frailties, let us conſider the Multitude, and then the Aggravations of them.

First, The Multitude of them will appear by theſe Conſiderations: 1. It will be needful to conſider what Sins we have been moſt inclined to, ſince our Calling: And we may eaſily call to Mind how our pleaſing Sin in former Times hath broken in upon us in latter Times. 2. We may conſider what our Conſtitutions have led unto; whether or no ſome inordinate Affection, or diſtemper'd Paſſion; if we obſerve the daily Stirrings of theſe, it will add greatly to the Matter of our Humiliation. 3. We are to remember our manifold Confeſſions and daily Prayers and Promiſes made in them; how often we have confeſſed the ſame Sins to God, and prayed againſt them; which argues many Relapſes and Backſlidings into them. 4. We may recount the Wanderings and Diſtractions of our Hearts in holy Duties; the Coldneſs and Deadneſs of our Prayers; Unprofitableneſs under the Means of Grace, eſpecially our wordly Thoughts, idle or earthly Talk upon the Lord's Day, and divers other Ways of uncomfortable Miſ-ſpending, at leaſt ſome Part of. 5. We may conſider how innumerable Sins paſs by us daily, that we take no Notice of. All theſe Meditations will bring Tidings of the Multitudes of our Relapſes and Infirmities.

Secondly, For the Aggravations of them, they are very fearful; 1. Becauſe they are committed

mitted againſt more Knowledge than we had in our unregenerate State. 2. Becauſe there is a greater Ingratitude in all Relapſes, in neglecting or abuſing the good Gifts of GOD, and turning his Grace into Wantonneſs. 3. Becauſe there is in theſe Relapſes, a Breach of Covenant with GOD in a heinous Manner, when we have bound our Hearts, yea, entred into an Oath and Curſe, to keep the Commandments of the LORD, at the Receiving of the Sacrament and in divers Caſes of Extremity; now by our Revolting, we break all ſuch Bonds aſunder: And beſides the Trangreſſing of GOD's Covenant, we break our Covenant with Him, ſo that He may juſtly avenge the Quarrel of his Covenant. 4. Becauſe there is ever in theſe Sins a great Grieving of the Spirit of GOD. Alas! if we grieve our Comforter, where ſhall we find Comfort? 5. Becauſe there is many Times a great Wrong that by our Falls we do unto the bleſſed Name of GOD, his Word, Religion, and the Profeſſion of Godlineſs; they make the Name of GOD to be blaſphemed. 6. Becauſe ſuch Backſliding breeds great Hardneſs of Heart, beſides the diſturbing of our Peace: As Iron that hath been heated in the Fire grows harder when it is taken out, ſo it is with an Heart that hath been once heated by the Grace of GOD's good Spirit. 7. If we have lain long in our Backſliding, our Condition is the more grievous. When a Man falls into a Sin, and immediately riſes again, he may more eaſily recover himſelf, than if he continue long in his lapſed State. An Arm or a Leg that is out of Joint, muſt quickly be ſet again; if it be long diſjointed, it will cauſe unſpeakable Torment to ſet it, and knit the Joints together again.

OUT of all that hath been ſaid, I may well draw this Concluſion, That in Caſe of Relapſe, all the Duty of Repentance, as Examination, Contrition and Confeſſion, are to be practiſed in a greater

Meaſure and in a more powerful Manner. So that in this Caſe, there muſt be a more ſtrict Examination of our Hearts and Lives; and that eſpecially for our Eſtate to Godward: Beſides, there muſt be a more ſevere Judging of ourſelves, and a greater Meaſure of Contrition; as Judges uſe to deal more roughly againſt Malefactors that are twice taken in the ſame Offence. In our Confeſſion we muſt be more particular and free, and large in aggravating the Circumſtances of theſe Kinds of Sins, and be more earneſt in Prayer with GOD both for the Pardoning and Healing of theſe Maladies; that our latter End be not worſe than our Beginning, yea, that we do not expoſe our poor Souls to the unclean Spirit to make a Re-entry into them with ſeven worſe than himſelf.

II. NOW to help us in the ſecond Thing, wherein the ſpiritual Exerciſe of Faſting conſiſted: to wit, A Senſe of GOD's infinite Wrath and moſt holy Indignation againſt Sin: Let us conſider,

1. THE Severity of GOD's Judgments and Puniſhment upon Sin. For which Purpoſe, look upon the Deſtruction of the Angels; the Curſe that fell upon *Adam* and all his Poſterity; the Confuſions which came upon the firſt World by the Flood; the Burning of *Sodom* with Fire and Brimſtone from Heaven; the Horrors of a guilty Conſcience, which is an Hell upon Earth; the everlaſting Fire which is prepared for reprobate Men and Angels. 2. That no Satisfaction would ſuffice, but the Blood of his own Son. Had all the bleſſed Angels proſtrated themſelves at the Foot of their Creator, with one ſtrong united Cry: Yet in the Point of Expiation of Sin, not any, nor all of theſe could have done any Good at all: Nay, if the Son of GOD Himſelf, bleſſed forever, ſhould have ſup-

ſupplicated and ſollicited (I mean without Suffering) the Father of all Mercies, yet He could not have prevailed; either the Son of GOD muſt die, or never could any Sin have been pardoned, nor any Soul ſaved.

III. To help us in the third Part of this ſpiritual Exerciſe, to wit, an impartial Acknowledgement, and ſenſible Feeling of our own unſpeakable Miſery by Reaſon of Sin, let us look back,

1. UPON our Time paſt; and therein conſider, That all the Sins thou haſt heretofore committed at any Time, in any Place, or with any Company, are upon Record, writ, as it were, with the Point of a Diamond, in the Book of thy Conſcience, by the Hand of GOD's Juſtice, and that whenſoever hereafter it ſhall pleaſe GOD, effectually to awaken thy Conſcience (if by timely Repentance thou prevent not the Wrath to come) they will torment thee with inexplicable Horror, and tear thy Soul in Pieces, when there is none to help.

WE ſee many Times one little Sin in the World's Eſteem, put a guilty Conſcience into a very Hell upon Earth. As I have heard of, and known in many, one for a ſhort ſudden Imprecation; another for an unworthy Thought conceived of GOD; another for covetouſly keeping a Thing found, and not reſtoring it, or enquiring after the Owner; thinking upon theſe Things in cold Blood, GOD putting particular Stings into theſe ſeveral Sins, were ſo afflicted in Conſcience, that their very Bones were broken; ſtrange Tremblings ſeized upon their Bodies; they had no Delight in any earthly Thing; they have been ready to deſpair of their Salvation, and make away themſelves. If the guilty Senſe then of one Sin, when GOD ſets it on, draw ſo many

many fiery Points of ſtinging Scorpions after it; what Tearing of Heart, Gnawing of Conſcience, and helliſh Rage, will the whole black and bloody Catalogue of all thy Sins, muſtered up together at once, bring upon thy Soul, when the Time of GOD's heavy Viſitation ſhall come upon thee, as Travail upon a Woman with Child? When all thy Sins together, all thy Lies, all thy Oaths, all thy Railings, all thy Paſſions and filthy Thoughts, jovial Meetings, and Ale-houſe Hauntings, all the Wrongs thou haſt done, all the Time thou haſt miſpent, thy Prophanation of every Sabbath, thy Killing of *Chriſt* at every Sacrament, thy Non-proficiency at every Sermon, thy Ignorance, thy Unbelief, thy Worldlineſs, thy Covetouſneſs, thy Pride, thy Malice, thy Luſt, thy Luke-warmneſs, Impatiency, Diſcontentedneſs, Vain-Glory, Self-Love, the innumerable Swarms of idle, wandring and wicked Imaginations; in a Word, all the Pollutions, Diſtempers, Eſtrangedneſs from GOD, in the inward Parts; all the Vanities and Rebellions of thy whole Life: I ſay, when all theſe ſhall be charged upon thy impenitent Soul, by the unquenchable Indignation of that juſt GOD, whoſe Mercy, and long Suffering, thou haſt abuſed; whoſe Anger thou haſt provoked all thy Life long; what an Hell wilt thou feel in thy Conſcience? What an unquenchable Fire will be kindled there? No mortal Heart can comprehend it; no Angel's Tongue can expreſs a thouſandth Part of that woful Horror.

CONSIDER, 2. How heretofore thou haſt had thy Hand in drawing many towards Hell, and haſt been a bloody Murderer of other Mens Souls. For ſo far as thou haſt been a Means to make others to ſin, ſo much as in thee lies, haſt thou damned them for ever. What a miſerable Man art thou then,

then, who haſt the Cry of many Souls bleeding to eternal Death, yelling loud in thine Ears? Even of all thoſe whom thou haſt any Ways inticed to any Sin, to Drunkenneſs, to Whoredom, or any Kind of Uncleanneſs, to Sabbath-breaking, to prophane Sports, to Lying, Swearing, to Idleneſs, Gaming, or wanton Dancing; or, in a Word, to any Service of *Satan*. Nay, it may be, the Soul of thine own Wife (if thou haſt one) that lies in thy Boſom, lies bleeding alſo to eternal Death, under thy bloody and mercileſs Hand, becauſe thou liveſt not with her as a Man of Knowledge. Knowledge, perhaps, thou haſt enough to thrive in the World; but no Wit, no Underſtanding, to tell her one Foot of the right Way to Heaven. Or, it may be, thine own dear Children are already in the Path that leads to endleſs Perdition, by thy Default: And the bloody Knife of thine unconſcionable Negligence ſticks deep in their Souls, and ſtops all Hope of Cure, becauſe thou doeſt not catechiſe them, call them to Account upon the Sabbath, prepare them for the Sacrament; becauſe thou doſt not reſtrain them from ill Company, idle Sports, and Prophaning the Sabbath. Nay, and perhaps beſides, becauſe thou art in thine own Family, a curſed Precedent of Sin.

To conclude this Point, and preſs this upon thine Heart, know aſſuredly, that all thoſe, in whoſe Damnation thou haſt had thine Hand, (and thou haſt done thy Part to damn all them, to whom thou haſt been any Cauſe to Sin) will hereafter, in that helliſh Dungeon, fly in thy Face with horrible and hideous Curſes, crying, *Woe*, that ever they ſaw thy Face; that ever they had thee to their Huſband, Father, or Maſter; a miſerable and wretched Man, that would never be warned, before

fore he had damned his own Soul, and undone many more for ever.

CONSIDER 3. How thus long thou haſt been *Satan*'s Bond-Slave, the *Devil*'s Drudge. Many a grievous Sin haſt thou committed at his Bidding. Thou haſt told many a Lie, uttered many a rotten Word and filthy Jeſt; perhaps been many Times drunk. At his Suggeſtion thou haſt harboured many an unclean, proud, covetous, malicious, diſdainful, unkind, impatient, angry and revengeful Thought. And aſſuredly, if thou wilt not leave the Devil's Colours, under which thou haſt march'd furiouſly thus long, and come under the Banner of *Chriſt*, to which thou haſt been called with Cries of Blood all thy Life long, thou wilt ſhortly be paid home for all thy curſed Service to the Powers of Hell, with everlaſting Plagues.

2. LOOK upon thy preſent Eſtate, and therein conſider 1. thy Hurtfulneſs, whilſt thou continueſt a natural Man. There is nothing in the World but thou hurteſt or vexeſt one Way or other. Thou fearfully diſhoureſt GOD the Father, by a ſtubborn Diſobedience to his Word. Thou trampleſt under Foot the precious Blood of *Chriſt*, by thy wilfull going on in Sin. Thou grieveſt GOD's bleſſed Spirit, by ſmothering thoſe holy Motions which he ſtirs up in thy Heart. Thou diſcontenteſt, ſo much as in thee lies, the bleſſed Angels, and bereaveſt them of that Joy which they would conceive at thy Converſion. Thou polluteſt all the Creatures thou meddleſt with, becauſe they are not ſanctified unto thee by the Word of GOD, and Prayer. And perhaps, as thou enjoyeſt them by Uſurpation, ſo ſometimes thou exerciſeſt mercileſs Tyranny over them. *A righteous Man* (ſaith *Solomon*) *regardeth the Life of his Beaſt, but the Mer-*

cies of the Wicked are cruel, Prov. xii. 10. As for thy Brethren in Iniquity, thou fearfully hardeneſt them, and encourageſt them in the Way to Hell; others thou impoiſoneſt with thy Example, and infectious Company. Neither in doing Miſchief, doſt thou ſpare thy own Family. Thou draweſt after thee thy Sons and Servants with the Cords of Vanity, and Cart-ropes of Inquity, as faſt and forcibly as thou canſt, into the ſame Damnation of Hell. In the mean Time, every Hour thou ſo continueſt, thou treaſureſt up to thyſelf Wrath, againſt the Day of Wrath; and when the Meaſure and the Number of thy Sins are full, perhaps in the brighteſt Sun-ſhine of thy worldly Happineſs, *the* LORD *will ſuddenly rain upon thee Snares, Fire and Brimſtone, and an horrible Tempeſt: And will laugh at thy Deſtruction, and mock when thy Fear comes.*

CONSIDER 2. that if thou now be cut off by the Stroke of Death, thou art certainly damned forever. And how many Ways mayſt thou die in a Day? Beſides the many Diſeaſes, that inſenſibly breeding in thy Body, may kill thee ſuddenly, thy Houſe is ſubject to Fire, Robbery, tempeſtuous Winds, Thunders, and other waſting Calamities. If thou put from Shore in a Ship, or Boat, there is but a Foot's Breadth between thee and Death. If thou get on Horſe-back, one Stumble may take away thy Life. What Protection haſt thou? What Aſſurance, be thou never ſo ſtrong or young, to ſee the Sun riſe the next Morning; ſince many have gone well to Bed, and before Morning it has become their Grave? If then there be ſo many Ways to let thee out of this Life, and thou mayſt be cut off ſo ſuddenly, and if thou die as thou art, art certainly damned, what a miſerable Man art thou?

3. LOOK

3. LOOK forward upon the Time to come. And herein consider, 1. Death, through which thou must shortly pass. 2. The dreadful Tribunal of the everliving GOD, before which thou must shortly appear. 3. That fiery Lake wherein thou must live forever, unless thou sincerely and heartily repent thee of thy wicked Life, and believe in the LORD *Jesus Christ*.

IV. To help in the Fourth Part of spiritual Exercise in Fasting, to wit, To get into our Hearts a Contempt of ourselves, most worthy to be abhorred in Dust and Ashes; do thou, that art yet in thy natural natural State, consider,

1. HADST thou seen that Man in *Luke* viii. out of whom *Christ Jesus* cast so many Devils, that for their Number, their Name was called, *Legion*, ver. 30. If thou hadst looked upon him all naked, as he was, haunting the Graves, tearing in Pieces his Chains, wherewith he was bound, and hurried often by the Devil into the Wilderness, thou wouldst have accounted him a Spectacle of extreme Misery. Now thou thyself in thy natural State, art a Thousand Times more miserable; nay, hadst thou in thy Body, for his Legion, a Million of Devils, yet shouldst thou be infinitely less miserable, than thy many unpardoned and unrepented Sins do make thee. My Reasons are these: 1. Every Sin is fouler than the foulest Fiend in Hell; as you have seen before. 2. The Devils may possess and have Power over the Bodies of the Saints, when GOD gives them Leave: They had over *Christ*'s, *Matt.* iv. 5. But such Sins as thine, unpardoned and unrepented of, cannot possibly be found in any sanctified Man. 3. Were all the Devils in Hell in thy Body, yet if thou heartily hatedst all Sin, and didst cleave to *Christ*, and his

Truth, they could not all do thee a Pin's Worth of Hurt about the Salvation of thy Soul: But one known Sin, loved and delighted in, will damn thy Soul forever.

2. CONSIDER what a Wretch art thou, that one Way or other wrongeſt all the World, GOD and Man; and makeſt every Creature in Heaven and Earth the worſe for thee, *Jer.* ii. 12.—iv. 28. —xiii. 10. *Pſalm* cvii. 34. *Gen.* xix. 25. *Exod.* xvii. 7. Yet by the Way let me tell thee, upon Repentance, all this inexplicable Miſery ſhall be turned into unconceivable Felicity.

V. TO help in the Fifth Part of this ſpiritual Exerciſe, to wit, To make thy Heart to break and bleed within thee for the Sins of thy Soul; before I propound the Helps, conſider, that the End of our Examination, is this Afflicting of our Souls (as the Scripture calls it) or the Humbling and Caſting down of our Souls before the LORD. The Prophet *Joel* calls it, the Renting of our Hearts. For therefore do we abſtain for a Time from Meat, that we may have a quick Senſe and Feeling of our own Unworthineſs. Therefore we bring down the Body, that the Mind might alſo be brought down, and our Hearts broken and rent in ſunder. Now this Humiliation for Sin muſt be eſpecially for the Vileneſs of our Sins, rather than for the Puniſhments, that are either felt or feared. Though the People of GOD ought to be humbled for GOD's Judgments, yet that is neither the only, nor the chief Cauſe of their Humiliation; but their Sins do moſt of all affect them. As it was with *David*, *Pſal.* xxxviii. 18. *I will declare mine Iniquity, and be ſorry for my Sin.* This we had need look very carefully unto, becauſe otherwiſe all our Labour will be loſt; and the LORD accounts no better of

that

that other worldly Sorrow, than He doth of the Roaring of a wild Bull in a Net; whereas the Sorrow for the Evil of Sin, as it is the Joy of Angels, ſo it is the Delight of our heavenly Father. This is for the Duty and Manner of it. Now to help thee in it, conſider,

1. How that Heart of thine hath been the Forge wherein all thy Sins were firſt hammered out; all thy filthy Thoughts, raging Paſſions, wicked Purpoſes, and rebellious Actions have ſprung from that Den of Darkneſs, and Dungeon of Iniquity. That bottomleſs Sink hath ſent out continually impoiſoned Streams of abominable Thoughts, Words, and Deeds all thy Life long. Then great Reaſon haſt thou, to make that Heart, for the Time to come, a Fountain of godly Sorrow, of penitent Tears, of Mourning, Lamenting and Bewailing thy Sins all the Days of thy Life. If *Chriſt Jeſus* vouchſafe to open upon thy Soul a Fountain of his own Heart's-Blood for Sins and for Uncleanneſs, thou art a curſed Wretch and cruel Enemy to thy Soul's Comfort, if thou doſt not endeavour to keep open in thine Heart a Counter-well, as it were, of Weeping over Him, whom thou haſt pierced, and for thoſe Sins which have put the Son of GOD to Death.

2. Conſider, that the Heart of the only dear, innocent Son of GOD, for thy Sake was pierced thro', and filled with that Singularity of ſpiritual Heavineſs, Anguiſh of Spirit and Affliction of Soul, that I am perſwaded, were all the ſeveral Sorrows of all the Sons and Daughters of *Adam*, from the Creation to the World's End, collected and inflicted upon one Heart, they would come ſhort. The Fierceneſs of his Father's Wrath did preſs Him ſo ſore and lie ſo heavy upon Him, that it wrung out of his bleſſed Body even Drops of Blood, and from

his Heart that rueful Cry, *My* GOD, *my* GOD, *why haſt Thou forſaken Me?* Now, ſhall the precious Heart of GOD's own Son (infinitely free from Sin) fall aſunder in his Breaſt like Drops of Water for thy Sins, and ſhall not thy ſinful Heart groan and ſigh at all? Shall it not mourn and melt for the infinite Abominations of thine own Heart and Life? Oh horrible Hardneſs! Prodigious Ingratitude!

3. BE aſſured, that if that Heart of thine be not wounded in this Day of thy Viſitation, while it is called to Day, it will and muſt hereafter be filled with that Horror, which would burſt a thouſand to think upon it; and abide the whole and unquenchable Wrath of GOD, flaming upon it with extreme Anguiſh World without End. Muſt the Son of GOD Himſelf lie bleeding upon the Croſs; and thinkeſt thou to go to Heaven upon a Bed of Down, and be ſaved without Trouble of Conſcience for Sin? Aſſure thyſelf, it will never be. It is infinitely more impoſſible than for thee to reach the Heaven with thine Hand. Either therefore let thy Heart break under the Hammer of the Word, while it is to Day, and make it the Subject of godly Sorrow; or, as ſure as thy Heart is in thy Body, it will hereafter become the Object, upon which the fierce Wrath of GOD, and fierceſt Torments in Hell ſhall be exerciſed with Extremity and Everlaſtingneſs. But if thou get a truly broken Heart into thy Boſom, thou preſently getteſt Right and Intereſt to all the Purchaſes of *Chriſt*'s Paſſion.

VI. To help in the Sixth Spiritual Duty of Faſting, to wit, To quicken and ſtir up to a particular and impartial Confeſſion of Sins, and to ſincere Acknowledgments of, and Expreſſions of inward Grief for, the ſame; conſider, 1. The Practice of the Saints. 2. In caſe of outward Troubles, People

are

are wont to wring their Hands, beat their Breasts, sometimes to tear their Hair, and weep immeasurably: Now assuredly, if the Concurrence of all *Job*'s outward Miseries upon one Man would require one watry Tear; the least Sin of thy Soul might justly challenge at thine Hand, a whole Torrent of bloody Tears. If thou wouldest spend one Sigh for the Death of thy Son, the Groaning out of the last Drop of thy dearest Blood were far too little for the Death of thy Soul. If thou wouldst wring thy Hands for the Loss of thine Husband, well mightest thou wail all the Days of thy Life, for the Loss of Communion with *Christ Jesus*. If thou wouldst beat thy Breast for the Burning of thine House, justly mightest thou break thine Heart in Pieces for the sinful Consumption of thy Soul. For doubtless, *Grace ought to raise our Affections as high about heavenly Things, as Nature about earthly.*

3. WEIGH well this Scripture: *He that covereth his Sins shall not prosper; but he that confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have Mercy, Prov.* xxviii. 13.

VII. To help in the Seventh spiritual Exercise, to wit, To get a Hatred of Sin, consider, 1. The Foulness, 2. Infectiousness, 3. Perniciousness of Sin. It is the only Object of GOD's extremest Hatred. It is fouler than the foulest Fiend in Hell. It is of that pestilential, infectious Property, that it pollutes every Thing it comes near. It is full of fearful and pernicious Effects; of which you heard largely before. All which, well weighed, might be sufficient to provoke an utter Hatred of it.

THUS far you have heard of those several Duties required in the spiritual Exercise of Fasting, all which concern our Humiliation; with the Means

and

and Motives thereunto. But farther, In a true ſpiritual Faſt, there muſt be Faſting from Sin, or the Forſaking of all our Sins: For whilſt we abſtain from lawful Things, we are admoniſhed much more to abſtain from all Things that are unlawful, at all Times. If we abſtain from Meats and Drinks, which at other Times we may uſe, we ought eſpecially to renounce all our Sins, which ſhould never be uſed. He that faſts from Meat, and abſtains not from Sin, is like the Devil and the Spirits of Darkneſs, which neither eat nor drink, and yet do Nothing elſe but diſhonour GOD; and ſo the Faſt of Drunkards, Whoremongers, and whoſoever lives in any known Sin, is no better then a deviliſh Faſt. Therefore ye ſhall ever find it the Practice of the Faithful, that at their Faſts, immediately they reformed thoſe Sins for which they mourned.

LIKEWISE the Word and Prayer muſt be added. We find the Word preached and read at ſuch Times, *Nehe.* ix. 3. they read in the Book of the Law one fourth Part of the Day, and together with their Reading, they expounded the Word, *Nehe.* viii. 8. So we always find in Holy Scripture, that Faſting is joined with Prayer, as in the forenamed Places.

Now foraſmuch as Prayer is a daily and ordinary Exerciſe of GOD's Children, it is manifeſt, that by Prayer that is coupled with Faſting, is underſtood a ſpecial Kind of Prayer, wherein two Things are requiſite; 1. Fervency of Deſire; This indeed is required always in our Prayers, but eſpecially upon ſuch Days of Humiliation: For then we muſt not only pray, but cry unto the LORD, *Joel* i. 14. whereby vehement Prayer is ſignified; yea, as the *Niniviites* ſpeak, *Jon.* iii. 2. *We are to cry mightily unto Him:* For the Uſe of outward

Ab-

Abſtinence is but the Wing of Prayer, wherewith it might more eaſily fly up to Heaven. And, 2. in ſuch a Prayer, there ſhould be an Aſſurance of Faith, that we ſhall obtain our Requeſt; the LORD having made a gracious Promiſe in many Places to this Ordinance, *Joel* ii. 18, 19. 2 *Chron.* vii. 14. *Iſa.* lviii. 8, 13. And let all the Faſts of the Churches of GOD and godly Men recounted in Scripture, both in the Old and New Teſtament be looked into, and it ſhall be ſeen that the End of their Faſt was a Feaſt; and the Iſſue of their Mourning great Rejoicing.

AND moreover, Works of Mercy muſt be added in this Caſe. *Is not this the Faſt that I have choſen, to looſe the Bands of Wickedneſs, to deal thy Bread unto the Hungry, to bring the Poor that are caſt out, into thy Houſe, and when thou ſeeſt the Naked to cover them?* Iſai. lviii. 6, 7. In a Word then, both in our publick and private Faſts, this muſt always be obſerved, that the Poor may have the Gain of our Faſting, and not our own Purſes: if their Loins and Bowels ſhall bleſs us, as *Iſaiah* ſpeaks, *the* LORD *will alſo bleſs us abundantly.*

YET farther we muſt ever in theſe Days of Humiliation, after we have humbled our Souls before the LORD, renew our Covenant with Him; and not only unfeignedly purpoſe, but faithfully promiſe Amendment, in performing the Duties we heretofore have omitted, and eſchewing thoſe Sins we heretofore uſed to commit: To make a ſure Covenant with our GOD, to part with all Sin, and to cleave to Him forever. And when you have enter'd into, or renewed this Covenant, take Heed of breaking of it. To this Purpoſe it may be neceſſary for the better Settling of our Reſolution, to bind ourſelves by a ſolemn Vow, as the *Jews* did,

Nehe.

Nehe. ix. *They made a ſure Covenant, and put their Seals to it*; and the Subſtance and Manner of their Covenant is ſet down, *Nehe.* x. 29. They enter'd into a Curſe and into an Oath to walk in GOD's Law, and to obſerve and do all his Commandments. The Neceſſity of this unfeigned Purpoſe required in this Exerciſe is evident, becauſe without it we remain in our Impenitency, and being impenitent Sinners, the LORD will not hear us. Beſides, our Hearts are exceeding fickle, and all good Motions and Purpoſes preſently die in them: Therefore they had Need be bound to their good Behaviour by ſolemn Vows and Reſolutions.

LASTLY, when all this is done, we muſt take Heed above all Things of inward Pride and Reſting in the Performance. It was the Caſe of the proud *Phariſee*, and it is alſo of the *Papiſts* at this Day, who will needs merit Heaven by ſuch Exerciſes as theſe. If the Devil can but prevail to make thee ſelf-conceited with thine Enlargements, and to truſt that Service thou haſt done, he will deprive thee of all the Benefits and Bleſſings of thy Humiliation. Labour therefore as much as poſſibly thou canſt, to humble thyſelf with a thorough View of thy Failings in the beſt of thy Performances; and the Conſideration of the Fountain of all thy Enlargements, which is not any Ability of thine own, but the good Spirit of GOD, breathing where, and when it liſteth, and letting out thy ſtraight Heart, which otherwiſe would be utterly ſhut up. Therefore let Him have the Glory of all thy Abilities and Enlargements, who hath given thee his Grace, and hath ſaid, That He will not give his Glory to another. When thou haſt done all that is commanded, (of which thou comeſt infinitely ſhort) thou art ſtill an unprofitable Servant. Let therefore (I repeat the Admonition) the ſe-

rious

rious Conſideration of the numberleſs Imperfections, Failings and Diſtractions, that attend thy beſt Actions, eſpecially Duties of a long Continuance, pluck the Plumes of all ſpiritual Pride: For they are enough to make the Heart of a true Chriſtian ſink in his Boſom, were it not that the Promiſes of GOD to accept his ſincere, tho' weak Performances, did encourage and ſupport him.



The End of Mr. BOLTON's WORKS.

6 JY 64

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN PRESTON, *D. D.*

Chaplain in Ordinary to his MAJESTY,
King CHARLES I.

MASTER of *Emmanuel-College* in CAMBRIDGE,

AND

Sometime Preacher of *Lincoln's-Inn.*

To which is prefix'd,

SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE.

By the Rev. Mr. BALL.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

WORKS

OF

BRITISH MUSEUM

Chaplain in Ordinary to His MAJESTY,
King CHARLES I.

MASTER of Pembroke-Hall in CAMBRIDGE,

AND

Sometime Preacher of Lincoln's-Inn.

SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE.

THE LIFE OF Dr. JOHN PRESTON.

JOHN PRESTON, the Son of *Thomas* and *Alice Preſton*, was born at *Heyford*, in *Northamptonſhire*. He was baptized, *October* 27, 1587, but was deſcended from the Family of the *Preſtons*, of *Preſton* in *Lancaſhire*.

His Mother's Maiden Name was *Marſh*; but ſhe had an Uncle, whoſe Name was *Creſwel*, a Man of Means and good Eſteem in *Northampton*, where he had been ſeveral Times Mayor. This Uncle being rich, and having no Child, was very careful of her, and took this Son, whilſt he was young unto himſelf, and ſent him to the Free-School in *Northampton*; and when he had been there ſome Time, his Uncle was perſwaded to remove him into *Bedfordſhire*, unto one Mr. *Gueſt*, who was accounted a better Teacher of the *Greek* Tongue; from whence, after he had perfected his

Studies

Studies in the *Greek*, he was ſent to *Cambridge*, and admitted of *King's-College*, in 1604.

TWO Years after he was perſwaded to remove to *Queen's-College*, where he was under the Tuition of Mr. *Oliver Bowles*, one of the Fellows of that Houſe, a very learned Man, and a careful Tutor, by whoſe Directions he grew in Knowledge, and improv'd greatly in his Studies. He already looked high, and grew acquainted with thoſe, that had Deſires to be Secretaries, or Agents in Princes Courts. He thought it below him to be a Miniſter, and accordingly got in with a Merchant, by whoſe Means he procured that he ſhould live in *Paris*, and learn the Language and Garb of *France*; and another Gentleman, in Recompence, ſhould be received and entertained in *London*, to learn our Garb and Language. Mr. *Creſwel*, of *Northampton*, was by this Time dead, and had bequeathed certain Lands in that Town to him. Theſe Lands he ſold, and put himſelf into a Poſture fit for that Deſign; but here he began to find, that he ſhould have ſaid: *If the* LORD *will, I ſhall live and do this or that*, Jam. iv. 15. for the Merchant died before the Exchange could be accompliſhed; and ſo theſe blooming Hopes died with him.

HE was of an able, firm Conſtitution, of a brown, comely Viſage, with a vigorous and vivid Eye; but ſomewhat inclining to Melancholy; which now began to be a little diſcovered in him. For being diſappointed in his Deſign, he grew diſcouraged, and retired. His Genius now led him to natural *Philoſophy*, wherein he reſolved to leave no Secret unattempted. *Ariſtotle* was his *Tutelary* Saint. No dark untrodden Path in all his *Phyſicks* or *Metaphyſicks*, but he was perfect in it; and ſo drowned

and

and devoted was he, that he ſeldom or never could be ſeen Abroad, to the Wonder of his former Companions; ſo that no Time paſſed idle; not that between the Ringing and Tolling of the Bell to Meals; and for his Sleep, he made it ſhort. And whereas notwithſtanding all Endeavours, there was one in the College that would always be up before him, he would let the Bed-Cloaths hang down, that in the Night they might fall off, and ſo the Cold awaken him; inſomuch, that his Tutor was conſtrained to tell him, As there might be Intemperance in Meats and Drinks, ſo alſo there might be in Studies. But the Evil of it, as yet, he felt not; the Sweet and Good he did; came off with Honour and Applauſe in all his Acts; and was admired in the *Regent* Houſe, when he ſat for his Degree, both by the *Poſers*, and all the Maſters that examin'd him, and from that Time much obſerved throughout the Univerſity.

ABOUT this Time his Tutor was called to the Rectory of *Sutton* in *Bedfordſhire*, and Dr. *Potter*, another of the Fellows, became his Tutor, a very learned Man, and great *Philoſopher*, who never went to diſſwade him from his Studies, but gave him all Aſſiſtance and Encouragement. Soon after he was choſen Fellow, by the unanimous Conſent of the Maſter and Fellows; and his Tutor, Dr. *Potter*, brought him Word of it, as he was at Study, not thinking any Thing, and told him: That he muſt come down into the Chapel preſently to be admitted; accordingly he was admitted Fellow of *Queen's-College*, in the Year 1609, five Years after his firſt Admiſſion into the Univerſity.

HE was by this Time grown a Maſter in *Philoſophy*, and had met with Few that were able to encounter him, and therefore now reſolved to go another While to School to *Hippocrates* and *Galen*.

He

He had a very penetrating Wit, and exact ſolid Judgment, to conjecture at Effects in Cauſes; and being ſkilful in *Philoſophy* before, ſoon made the *Theory* his own. But becauſe the Life and Vigour of a Science is in the Practice, he reſolves to make Enquiry after that: So he retired unto a Friend of his in *Kent*, who was very famous for his Practice, where he earneſtly ſtudied the Art of knowing Simples, and compounding Medicines. And ever after, when any of his Pupils were ill, tho' he ſent them unto Phyſicians, yet himſelf peruſed, and many Times corrected their Preſcriptions.

IT was not eaſy to allay his eager and unſatisfied Appetite and Apprehenſion with any one Art: Hence he thought he could not be a good Phyſician, that could not read the Powers of the Herbs and Plants in Stars and Planets, and therefore acquaints himſelf with *Ptolomy*, and other Authors in *Aſtrology*, and other curious Arts and *Calculations*, as they are called, *Acts* xix. 19. that he might be able to ſtudy, not only Books, but Men; and to read Men's Fortunes in the heavenly Bodies; but he could not read his own: For as he was in theſe celeſtial Contemplations, it fell out, that Mr. *Cotton*, then Fellow of *Emmanuel-College*, preached in St. *Mary*'s where Mr. *Preſton* hearing him, was ſet about another Exerciſe, conſtrained from his Contemplations in *Aſtrology*, to look into himſelf. This Sermon bereaved him of two beloved Notions; One was his low Opinion of the Miniſtry and Preaching; for he ſaw an over-ruling Gravity and Majeſty in that Sermon, that he thought had not been in Pulpits: Another was his great Opinion of State-Employments; for theſe were higher Things that now were offered to him; Concernments of eternal Influence, which nothing could divert him from.

MR.

MR. *Preſton* after this, wanted Eaſe; and, when he could not find it in his other Books, begins a little to look into the Bible. In the Proſecution of his Study in *Philoſophy*, he found many of the Schoolmen quoted; and ſo was willing to look a little into them; and finding thoſe he light on, Pithy and Sententious, went on. It gave him Eaſe, that he was now a Student in Divinity, and had left *Albumaſar* and *Guido*, and ſuch high-flown Speculations; yet it pleaſed him to find his Maſter *Ariſtotle* ſo often quoted, and in ſuch Requeſt among them; and he thought if that were to be a Preacher, he might adventure well enough upon it, and ſo was drawn on very far in the Study of the School-Divines. I have heard him ſay, There was nothing that ever *Scotus* or *Occham* wrote, but he had weighed and examin'd. He continued longer in *Aquinas*, whoſe Sums he would ſometimes read as the Barber cut his Hair, and when it fell on the Place he read, he would not lay down his Book, but blow it off; and in this Tune he continued, until a Rumour came into the Univerſity, that the King would ſhortly come to viſit them.

DR. *Harſnet*, Maſter of *Pembroke-Hall*, was then Vice-Chancellor, a prudent, well-adviſed Governor; who knowing well the critical and able Apprehenſion of the King, was very careful and ſollicitous to pitch upon the ableſt in every Faculty, for Actors in that ſolemn Entertainment; and himſelf made Choice of Mr. *Preſton*, to anſwer the Philoſophy Act. The King commended all the Actors; but above all, Mr. *Preſton:* Many of the Great Ones did the ſame: And Sir *Fulk Greviſl*, afterward Lord *Brook*, after many Demonſtrations of his real Love, ſettled at laſt a Stipend on him of *Fifty Pounds* a Year, and was his Friend unto his laſt Hour.

HIS

HIS Reputation now continually increaſed, ſo that he was accounted the only Tutor; and being careful to read unto his Pupils, and direct their Studies, he found himſelf abridged of his own Time, and was conſtrained to take up the Time that ſhould have been beſtowed on his Body. He grew acquainted now with many eminent Miniſters, as Mr. *Dod*, and Mr. *Hilderſham*, who would come often to his Chamber, and he would get them many Times to go to Prayer with his Pupils; a Boldneſs not adventured on by any other: But by theſe Labours, his able Body was debilitated. It was a great Orator that ſaid: "At firſt I would not plead, at laſt I could not." Mr. *Preſton* in his Youth would not ſleep: Now he could not, but about Midnight ſtill awoke, and ſlept no more; whereby in Time his Body languiſhed, and could not anſwer as in former Times.

IT was not long before it came to Mr. *Preſton*'s Courſe to be Dean and Catechiſt, which he reſolved to improve, by going thro' a Body of Divinity, that he might be a Guide unto the Scholars in their Studies in Divinity. This being known, and ſome honeſt Townſmen hearing him at firſt by Chance, there came the next Day very many to hear him, and the next Day more, both Townſmen and Scholars from other Colleges, ſo that the outward Chapel would be often full before the Fellows came. Complaint was made to the Vice-Chancellor of this unuſual Kind of Catechizing. It was aſſured, that not only the Townſmen and Scholars mingled, but other Colleges intruded alſo, that the Fellows, for the Crowd, could not get through, and come to their Places in the Chapel; that it was not ſafe for any Man to be thus doted on,

on, unleſs they had a Mind to cry up *Puritaniſm*, which would in a ſhort Time pull them down.

AN Order was agreed on in the Conſiſtory, and ſent unto the College, that the Scholars and Townſmen ſhould be confined to their proper Preachers; that no Stranger, neither Townſman nor Scholar, ſhould preſume to come unto theſe Lectures, that were proper only for the Members of the College. The Edict was obſerved punctually, and the Auditory by it much impaired. Had Strangers ſtill been ſuffered to attend, thoſe Sermons had been printed; for there were divers that exactly noted, and wrote out all fair, unto the Time of this Reſtraint; but no one after that could go on with it, and ſo it reſts. But he went on, and was aſſiduous to the Year's End, which was a great Help unto many of his Pupils, who made the greater Uſe of thoſe Things, becauſe they were not in Print.

ABOUT that Time the Lecture at *Trinity*-Church, and the Sermons at St. *Andrew's* were prohibited, and the Scholars all confined to St. *Mary's*, which occaſion'd Mr. *Preſton* to read Divinity to his Pupils on the LORD's *Days*, at Three o'Clock in the Afternoon, which he alſo often did upon the Week Days; but the Townſmen and the Scholars of other Colleges, that had taſted of his Spirit in the Chappel, pray'd that he would do it where they might hear. *Botolph's* belongs unto *Queen's-College*, and is uſually ſupplied by one of that Houſe; there he was willing to make a Trial, and reſolved the next LORD's Day to preach at Three o'Clock, after St. *Mary's* Sermon ſhould be ended; which tho' but very little known, occaſioned ſuch a Throng and Crowd, as was incredible.

THERE

THERE dwelt then in the Pariſh one Dr. *Newcomb*, a Civilian, and Commiſſary to the Chancellor of *Ely*, who being in the Church, and ſeeing the Crowd, commanded that Evening-Prayer ſhould be read, and no Sermon preached. The Miniſter intreated that for that Time Mr. *Preſton* might preach; ſo did the Earl of *Lincoln* and others in the Church: But he was reſolute; and becauſe he wou'd not be further importuned, went away with all his Family, and left them to determine at their Peril what they would do: So, upon Advice, it was concluded that the Sermon ſhould go on; and Mr. *Preſton* preached upon 2 *Pet.* iii. 17, 18. There was ſo much Time ſpent in Debates about it, before the Commiſſary left the Congregation, that it was too late to do both, and therefore they adventured, for that Time, to forbear Common-Prayer, that ſo the Scholars might depart, and be at College-Prayers. But this inſtructed Dr. *Newcomb* in his Complaint. The Court was then near at hand, that is, at *New-Market*. Thither the Commiſſary went the next Day, and having the Biſhop of *Ely* there, and many other Clergymen, aſſured them that Mr. *Preſton* was in Heart, and would quickly be in Practice a Nonconformiſt, and was ſo followed in the Univerſity, that unleſs ſome ſpeedy Courſe were taken with him, they might ſee their Power trodden under Foot; and told them, Gentleneſs was not the Way, for he was cunning, and would recover all, if he were not throughly dealt with.

THERE was no Advocate for Mr. *Preſton*; but the Doctor being firſt in his own Cauſe, ſeemed juſt. The *Puritans* began to be conſiderable, and they doubted he might come in Time to head them. It's a great Security to a Man to be deſpiſed: But *David*, that hath a Party following him, muſt have an Army to attend him. The King was acquaint-

ed

ed with this Complaint, and assured, That Mr. *Preston* had as strong an Influence into the *Puritans*, as the Principal of the *Jesuites* had upon them, and therefore it behoved him to consider what to do. A Word was enough to a jealous King, who immediately enquired, Whether the Bishop's and Chancellor's Jurisdiction extended unto Members of a College, and finally concluded to proceed against him, by the Power of the University.

A LETTER was then framed to Dr. *Scot*, Master of *Clare-Hall*, Vice-Chancellor at that Time, and to the Heads, to call Mr. *Preston* before them, to give a strict Account of that Disobedience to the Commissary. He answered mildly, That he was not guilty; referr'd himself unto the Auditory, that Evening Prayer was omitted, because the Scholars might depart in due Time; (seeing the Time allotted for it, was spent in treating with the Commissary,) not out of any Disrespect unto the Service, which he himself did usually attend at other Times. They told him: They were engaged to support, by all just Means, the Bishop's Jurisdiction: That the King had honoured him, in leaving that Affront to be examined by his proper Judges, and that except he could take off the Court, they must proceed to a severe Censure.

MR. *Preston* was not altogether a Stranger at the Court: When he came to *New-market*, he found that Bishop *Andrews*, then Bishop of *Ely*, was Chief, and that his Jurisdiction in the Commissary, was it that was pretended to be affronted, therefore he applied himself to him, and told him, That he did not purpose to offend, but being engaged to preach at that Time, could not with Honour disappoint the Auditory; if he suspected him for any Thing, desired he would examine him, and satisfy

ſatisfy himſelf. The Biſhop told him, the King was told he was an Enemy to Forms of Prayer, and held no Prayer lawful but extemporary: And therefore being popular, his Judgment and Opinion might do Hurt. Mr. *Preſton* anſwered, that it was a Slander, for he thought Set Forms lawful, and refuſed not on all Occaſions to be preſent at the College Prayers, and when it was his Turn, to read them. The Biſhop anſwered, that he was glad, and would inform the King, and do him all the Good he could, and bad him wait a While, and then repair again to him; and ſo Time paſſed on, and there was nothing done. But Dr. *Young*, Dean of *Winchester*, told Mr. *Preſton* plainly, that Biſhop *Andrews* was his greateſt Adverſary, and though he gave him good Words, yet aſſured the King, that if Mr. *Preſton* was not expell'd the Univerſity, Lord Biſhops would not long continue: Only becauſe Mr. *Preſton* was accounted a learned Man, he was not willing to appear againſt him; but deſired the Puniſhment might be inflicted, where the Fact was done, and that was in the Univerſity.

MR. *Preſton* ſaw now, that the Biſhop was a Courtier, and could give Words, where Deeds were not intended, and therefore went again unto the Biſhop, and told him plainly, That he or none muſt put a Period to his Attendance; and that either he would ſpeak unto the King in his Behalf, or tell him plainly, that he would not. The Biſhop pauſed a While, and at laſt bad him come ſuch a Time again, and he would deal with the King in his Behalf.

So he went to the King, and told him that however Mr. *Preſton* was very dangerous, yet he doubted it would not be well to expel him; for he would be

be absolved in the Opinions of Men, and applauded as their Martyr: And therefore he thought it would be better to enjoin him to declare his Judgment about Forms of Prayer; for that would be accounted a Recantation, and would weaken his Reputation with the *Puritans*. Accordingly an Order was sent to the Vice-Chancellor, that Mr. *Preston* should in *Botolph*'s Church declare his Judgment, concerning Forms of Prayer, upon a certain *Sunday*.

BEFORE he could come Home, the News was all about the Town, that Mr. *Preston* was to preach a Recantation Sermon at *Botolph*'s Church on such a Day. On that Day there was a very great Assembly, though he did all he could to have concealed it. So he went on upon his former Text, and preached a very profitable Sermon, concerning Growing in Grace, and directed Prayer, as a special Means to make Men grow in Grace. Now that (he said) was of two Sorts, either that which was extemporary; or set and prescribed before. And whereas some thought this was to stint the Spirit, he said, there was a Liberty to use conceived Prayer at other Times, wherein the Spirit might enlarge itself. They that came to laugh, had no great Cause to do it, for this Passage was at the very Close; and the Sermon all along before, was sharp and searching; both Sides were silent and went Home, not without some Prints of Good upon their Spirits. Indifferent Hearers praised all, and were confirmed in a good Opinion of the Preacher. Good Men were glad he came so well off, and was at Liberty to preach again.

KING *James* had always something in his Writings and Speeches against the *Puritans*, which was ill taken, for that it was apparent, those meant

thereby, were conſcientious Perſons. The Houſe of Commons was the only Mote in King *James*'s Eye, the *Remora*, (as he conceived) unto his abſolute Dominion; for he knew not how to engage them, as he did the Lawyers and Divines; but if he ſtopped one Mouth with Preferment this Parliament, there would be others open the next. There were ſome now that adventured to apologize for *Puritans*, and to ſay in Parliament, That honeſt Men were wounded under that Name; and to propoſe, that godly Miniſters might not be ſilenc'd, and thrown out of their Free holds for Trifles and Ceremonies. But King *James* would not bear this; but broke up the Parliament, and ſet out Proclamations againſt them.

THE Chaplains that attended monthly at the Court, were not ambitious of preaching over often; and ſo a Combination was agreed on for Preachers before the King, whenever he ſhould lie within 12 Miles of *Cambridge*. By this Means it came to Mr. *Preſton*'s Turn to preach before the King at *Royſton*. He could not decline it; for that would have expoſed him unto too much Obſervation; and yet he feared what might befall him in the Doing of it.

WHEN he was to preach, it fell out that his Courſe came upon a *Tueſday*. The Court was very thin, and the Prince and Duke of *Buckingham* were both abroad, and the King himſelf was for an Hunting-Match that Day, and gave Order that the Sermon ſhould begin at eight o'Clock. Mr. *Preſton* had ſome at the Court, that were ſollicitous as well as he, and they told him it would give very great Content, if he would take Occaſion in the Sermon, to ſhew his Judgment, as he had done before about ſet Forms. Dr. *Young*, Dean of *Wincheſter*,

chester, (of whom we spake before) did then attend, and when the King came in, he told him who it was that was to preach, and said, He hoped he would give Content: I pray GOD he do, said the King. The Text was *John* i. 16. which he so clearly opened and applied, that the King sat all the while as quiet as could be, and never stirred nor spake to any Body, but by his Looks discovered he was pleased. When Mr. *Preston* had done, he came to the King, as 'tis usual, to kiss his Hand; and the King asked him of what *Preston* he was descended, he answered of that in *Lancashire:* Then said the King, you have many of your Name and Kindred very eminent; and *Preston* the Priest, although a *Papist*, is a very learned Man.

GREAT Haste was made to bring in Dinner, and the King was very pleasant all the Time; had his Eye continually upon Mr. *Preston*, and spake of divers Passages in the Sermon with much Content. As soon as ever he was retired, the Marquis of *Hamilton* kneeled down, and besought him, that he might commend the Preacher to him for his Chaplain, protested he did not so much as know him, but that he was moved by the Weight and Strength of that he had delivered: told him, he spoke no Pen and Ink-Horn Language, but as one that comprehended what he said, and that he could not but have Substance and Matter in him. The King acknowledged all, but said it was too early.

THERE were few Clergymen at Court, and so no Opposition; yet the King himself hung back: He was not reconcileable to the *Puritans*, and so desired not in that Respect to engage him; but he desired to deprive them of Mr. *Preston* and to divide him from them. With this View he was graciously re-

receiv'd and admitted Chaplain in Ordinary to the Prince.

ABOUT this Time, Dr. *Dunn*, Preacher at *Lincoln's-Inn* died, and ſome in that Society propoſed Mr. *Preſton* for the Place. It ſuited with him, to have an Opportunity to exerciſe his Miniſtry in a conſiderable and intelligent Congregation, where he was aſſured, many Parliament Men, and others of his beſt Acquaintance would be his Hearers; ſo he conſented and undertook the Place. The Chapel then was very little, and at firſt, the Numbers that attended on his Miniſtry, beſides their own Society, were few; but when the Chapel was new-built, the Numbers were exceeding great that were his conſtant Hearers, and ſuch Foundations were laid, as will not eaſily be ruined.

THIS was ſome Eaſe unto his Mind, that was grieved for Dr. *Davenant's* leaving the College and Univerſity; but filled not his great Capacity and large Deſire of doing Good. The College he gave over, in his Thoughts, but not the Univerſity, where his Preaching made great Impreſſions. And tho' at *Lincoln's-Inn*, he had Gown-men to hear his Doctrine; yet they were not likely to propagate and ſpread it. A Preacher in the Univerſity begets Begetters, and tranſmits unto Poſterity, what GOD is pleaſed to reveal to him. And he of all Men, thirſted after Opportunities of doing Service, and might well ſay with the Spouſe, that *he was ſick of Love*, Can. ii. 5.

SOME of the Fellows of *Emmanuel*-College were very eminent for Parts and Learning, yet clouded by an Opinion that lay upon the College, that they were *Puritans*; that is, not only godly and religious, (for ſo they were, and were content to be eſteemed)

eſteemed) but Non-conformiſts, and averſe to Government; they thought therefore, if they could prevail with Dr. *Chaderton*, their preſent Maſter, to reſign, they might perhaps procure that Mr. *Preſton* might ſucceed him, and bring the College into Reputation, being a good Man, and yet a Courtier, the Prince's Chaplain, and very gracious with the Duke of *Buckingham*. But the old Doctor was exceeding wary and backward herein, 'till he received the following Letter from the Duke of *Buckingham*.

SIR,

I HAVE *moved his Majeſty, concerning Mr.* Preſton's *ſucceeding of you, in the Maſterſhip of* Emmanuel-*College, who is, not only willing, but alſo graciouſly pleaſed to recommend him to the Place in eſpecial Manner before any other; ſo that in making this Way for him, you ſhall do a very acceptable Thing to his Majeſty; as alſo to the Prince his Maſter; of which I am likewiſe to give you Notice: And to put you out of all Doubt, that another may be thruſt upon you; you ſhall not need to fear any Thing, in Regard that from his Majeſty there will be no Hinderance to his Succeſſion; and for that Point of Supply of Maintenance, I ſhall (as I promiſed) take Care for to procure it, when fit Occaſion ſhall be offered; ſo taking kindly what you have done, I reſt,*

Your very loving Friend,

G. BUCKINGHAM.

Theobalds, *Sept.* 20, 1622.

THOUGH the Statute ordain a Vacancy of ſeven Days, and Notice by a Schedule paſſed upon the Chapel-Door, yet ſuch was the uniform Agreement of all the Fellows, that it was not diſcover'd to any of the Scholars until the Day of Election. And becauſe there is a Sacrament to be immediately before it, they were conſtrained to lock up all the Gates, that none might come in, or go out, 'till it was paſt; and then two of the Fellows were diſpatch'd to *Queen*'s-College, to acquaint Mr. *Preſton* with what they had done; and to deſire, that at Two o'Clock he would repair unto the College to be admitted, and undertake the Charge.

THIS was ſtrange News at *Queen*'s. And there was an Order given preſently, That all the Scholars ſhould be ready againſt Two o'Clock that Day, to attend Mr. *Preſton*, and the Fellows, to *Emmanuel*-College, in Habits ſuitable unto their ſeveral Qualities, which was done accordingly; and a very great Company attended him, from *Queen*'s to *Emmanuel*, where they were cheerfully received, and entertained according to the Cuſtom; and then returned to *Queen*'s, but left Mr. *Preſton*, the Prop and Glory of it, at *Emmanuel*.

THIS News ran ſwiftly all the Kingdom over, and was received as Men were affected. Good Men were glad that honeſt Men were not abhorred, as they had been at the Court. The Courtiers made full Account that he was theirs, and would mount up from one Step to another, until he were a Prelate; eſpecially the Duke of *Buckingham*, who from this Time ſeemed ſincerely to affect him. The Earl of *Penbroke*, and the Counteſs of *Bedford*, had a great Intereſt in him, and he in them; and all Men looked on him as upon a riſing Man, and reſpected him accordingly. As for

for the Members of *Lincoln's-Inn*, they reckon'd that by their Means eſpecially he roſe to this Honour, as having firſt expreſs'd their good Opinion of him, and took Occaſion to expreſs it, according to their ſeveral Diſpoſitions and Relations, when he came to them in the Term, which ſhortly followed.

ABOUT this Time, Sir *Arthur Chicheſter* was choſen to go Ambaſſador into *Germany*, about the *Palatinate* Affairs, and Mr. *Preſton* was, by the Duke of *Buckingham*, and other Friends, deſign'd to go along with him. He did not greatly fancy the Employment, but would not contradict; only it was conſider'd, that tho' he was the Prince's Chaplain, and Maſter of a College, yet he was not Doctor, which they thought might ſound ill Abroad; therefore a Mandate was addreſs'd to the Vice-Chancellor and Heads, that foraſmuch as Mr. *Preſton* was to wait upon my Lord Ambaſſador, and could not in ſo ſhort Time perform his Acts, he ſhould be forthwith admitted Doctor in Divinity, that he might be ready to attend the Service; which was done accordingly with all Alacrity. But the Voyage came to nothing; for Sir *Arthur* did not go, as he intended.

IT was ever his Ambition, not to be mercenary in the Miniſtry, but to preach where he might do moſt Good, without Reſpect to the Wages; and he conſider'd that the Maſter of *Emmanuel* could have no Living, that had Cure of Souls annexed, and therefore was willing to give Ear unto the Sollicitations of the Townſmen, who greatly preſt him to be their Lecturer at *Trinity*-Church. After much Oppoſition, he was confirmed Lecturer there, where he preached all his Time after, and did much Good.

DEATH

DEATH knocks alike at Palaces, as at the meaneſt Cottages; for on *March* 27, 1625, the LORD's-Day, about Ten o'Clock in the Morning, King *James* died at *Theobald*'s. He was much beloved of his Servants, as well as of his Children, and was greatly lamented of both. Indeed it was a very mournful Morning. Dr. *Preſton* then attended in his Month, and was ſometimes haſten'd to the Prince, to comfort him; and ſometimes to the Duke; for they were both of them retired, and wept bitterly. But Sir *Edward Conway*, and ſome of the Lords, proclaim'd *Charles Stuart* King; and Haſte was made to *London*. The Prince and Duke, and Dr. *Preſton*, in Coaches ſhut down, haſten'd to *Whitehall*, and there he was proclaim'd again, with much Solemnity, and great Rejoicing of the People.

NOT long after, the Duke reſolved to drop Dr. *Preſton*. The Doctor was too knowing, not to ſee this afar off; and had accordingly provided a Succeſſion of Reſerves, wherein to hide himſelf. The firſt and ſureſt was his Conſcience, 2 Cor. 1, 12. *This is our Rejoicing, the Teſtimony of our Conſcience, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, not with fleſhly Wiſdom, but by the Grace of* GOD, *we have had our Converſation in the World.* An undeniable Argument whereof was, that he never ſued for the leaſt Preferment; but ſtudied, and often conſulted, how without breaking, he might avoid them.

AND though he lived like himſelf, and gave Relief to others, yet it was ever of his own. And indeed, he was a Man of very much Communion and ſweet Society with GOD; prayed much in private, and by himſelf, beſides as Tutor with his Pupils, and after, as Maſter of his Family. Whatever Weakneſs he was in, or Buſineſs did occur, he kept

kept many private Days of Faſting by himſelf, eſpecially before the Sacraments and Sabbath-Days; and accordingly enjoyed a conſtant Clearneſs and Aſſurance of his Juſtification, and Intereſt in the Blood of *Chriſt*; even then, when Frailties and Infirmities did moſt of all afflict him. He never (that I know) was troubled or perplexed about Adoption, though very often about the Imperfection of his Graces; ſo that he ſtudied moſt exactly the Treatiſe of the Saints Infirmities; and there is nothing in all his Works, that may more properly be called his.

HIS next Retreat was to *Lincoln*'s-*Inn*. For there was a Reſolution in ſome of the Fellows, to petition the Duke, who was now Chancellor of the Univerſity, to annul the Statute of Continuance or Commoration in the College; yet he conceived the Lawyers would pretend a Kind of Freedom and Exemption. For he ſaw, when Dr. *Sibs* was outed, both of Fellowſhip and Lecture in the Univerſity, yet he was received and retained at *Gray*'s-*Inn* unto his Death; therefore he would in no Sort leave his Title unto, and Intereſt in *Lincoln*'s-*Inn*, but reſerved it in his Power unto his dying Day.

BUT he knew Kings had long Hands, and that the Duke's were nothing ſhorter; therefore he pondered of removing farther off, if need were. And having weighed all Retreats, reſolved upon *Baſil*, in the *Switzers* Country; and determined, in caſe he could not be free in *England*, to ſettle there, and ſpend the Reſidue of his Days in writing what he was not ſuffered to preach, or had not publiſhed according to his Mind.

HE was naturally very affable and courteous unto Strangers of any Country, and by converſing much with

with them, endeavoured to preſerve his Knowledge in the *French* and *Italian* Languages. After he had thus reſolved upon *Baſil*, he was very friendly to all the *Germans*, that were diſperſed from ſeveral Univerſities, eſpecially from the *Palatinate*; for whom he procured ſeveral Sorts of Entertainments, both in the Country abroad, and in the Univerſity; for which, as he had very many gratulatory Epiſtles from particular Perſons, ſo one from the King of *Bohemia*, under his Hand and Seal.

BUT he knew that theſe were but the Foxes Earths, that might ſucceſſively be taken and poſſeſſed. He therefore truſted only in the Name of the LORD, that is, the Goodneſs, Mercy, and Power, of the mighty GOD; where he was well aſſured, he ſhould for ever be free enough from Kings and Dukes.

THERE was in the County of *Northampton*, a Gentleman of very able Parts, and clear Affections to the publick Good, no Stranger to the Court in former Times, nor to the Duke of *Buckingham*, with whom the Doctor uſed to communicate Affairs, and who was then a Parliament-Man of much Eſteem; to him, the Doctor in a Letter diſcovers all, ſhews him the Poſture of the Duke, how much they both were deceived in him. This Letter was let fall by him, that was entruſted to convey it, about *Temple-Bar*, and handed from one to another, until it came to Sir *Henry Spillers*; who having pondered the Contents, concluded it was a Purchaſe that would ingratiate him unto the Duke, and ſo immediately preſented it to him.

THE Duke was troubled to read his Faults and Fate ſo ſhrewdly intimated and preſaged. His Temper was exceeding good, and he could manage his

his Affections many Times with much Serenity and Moderation; but now he was quite off, and could not think of any thing but Revenge. But it pleaſed GOD to cut the Duke out other Work; for the Cry of *Rochelle* and the Proteſtants of *France*, was ſo exceeding great, and ſo much reſented by the Parliament, that the Duke reſolved to vindicate his Honour by relieving them. And whilſt he was buſy to ſet that Fleet out, and furniſh Forces, he could not undertake that Revenge intended againſt Dr. *Preſton*.

ALL this Time, the Doctor's Labour in preaching and ſtudying, was exceeding great; but that which ſpent and wore him out, was his Troubles for the Churches Safety and Proſperity. Often he would inculcate that, 2 *Cor.* xi. 28. *That which cometh upon me Daily, the Care of all the Churches.* When his Body therefore began to be ſick and languiſh, he was content a little to abate, and thought a Country-houſe in ſome good Air might help, as formerly it had done; and accordingly took one at *Linton*, near the Hills about ſix Miles off, which he furniſhed and purpoſed to be in all the Week, and come on *Saturdays* to preach upon the LORD's-*Days*; and had this Courſe been taken Time enough, good might have been done. But now he feared, Sollicitude would but be changed into Solitude, the Air of ſuitable Converſe, he doubted, would be wanting there; and being alone, he ſaw, would too much gratify his Melancholy. The Spring therefore approaching, he was willing to conſult with ſome Phyſicians; and *London* being far off, he ſent to *Bury* for Dr. *Deſpotine*. His preſent Malady was Want of Reſt, which now Tobacco would not help him to, as formerly it had done; and therefore he propoſed letting Blood. The Doctor plainly told him, that might perhaps allay his Heats,

Heats, and purchaſe Sleep; but on other Accounts, it would be fatal to him. He was enticed notwithſtanding, with the Hopes of preſent Eaſe, and ſo was let Blood, but never lived to repair that Loſs: For ſinking more and more, he went to *London*, and took Advice of thoſe that were beſt acquainted with his State of Health; by their Advice he retired a little to *Newington*, to a Friend of his that lived there, and then to *Hertfordſhire* to a thinner and more penetrating Air. The Malady they all agreed was in his Lungs, which were not ulcerated neither, but obſtructed and oppreſt with ſtiff and clammy Matter that he could not void. Perſpiration was that he wanted, and they ſuppoſed a penetrating Air might do the Cure; but that was found too ſearching and corroſive for the other Parts, which were pervious enough and penetrable. He therefore thought upon *Northamptonſhire*, his native Country. He had at *Preſton*, four Miles from *Heyford*, a very dear and Boſom-Friend, that was ambitious of entertaining good Men: Old Mr. *Dod* was but a Mile off, and being invited thither, he pitch'd upon it, where he enjoyed with great Contentment, what Air, Converſe of Friends, and loving Entertainment could afford, and at the firſt was much refreſhed by it; but Nature being ſpent, and no Foundation being left to work upon, all his Refreſhing quickly flagg'd. He had before made Uſe of Dr. *Aſhworth*, and he was one of much Experience, and knew his Body well; therefore he thought of Riding over to *Oxford* to him, which he did, and there continued about twelve Days, and conſulted with ſuch as were there of any Note. Dr. *Aſhworth* was perſwaded that the Scurvy was his Diſeaſe, and that the *London* Doctors had all miſtook their Mark, and therefore pitched upon Applications ſuitable: A great Error for ſo experienced a Doctor. The old Man upon this Perſwaſion,

ſion, came over unto *Preſton* with him, ſteep'd and ſtrain'd Scurvey-graſs, and gave him Drenches able to have weakened a ſtronger Man than he was now; and having ſtay'd and tamper'd with him about three Weeks, and finding nothing anſwer his Expectation, he took his laſt Leave of him, giving ſuch Order and Direction as he thought good, and return'd to *Oxford*, *July* 9, 1628.

THIS Fancy of the Scurvy failing, and Dr. *Aſhworth* being gone, he reſigned up himſelf to GOD alone, and let all Care of *Phyſick* and the Doctors go. He had a Servant who had been laborious with him, and whom he often uſed as a Friend. To him he therefore now unboſomed himſelf, not only touching the Vanity and Emptineſs of all Things here below, but his own Belief and Expectation of a ſudden Change; not of my Company, (ſaid he) for I ſhall ſtill converſe with GOD and Saints, but of my Place, and Way of doing it. His *Will* was made ſome Years before, but he was doubtful, if it came to be prov'd, it might be baffled; and therefore purpoſed to wave it, and make a Deed of Gift to him, that was in that *Will* his Executor, with ſuch Reſtrictions and Limitations as he thought good, all which he ſet down with his own Hand, wherein he carefully provided for his Mother during Life, and both his Brothers. His Books, and all the Furniture and Goods in his Lodgings at *Emmanuel*-College, he gave to one of his Pupils that was Fellow there, whom he always greatly favoured. Some Exhibitions he gave to the Scholars there, to be diſpoſed of from Time to Time, by him that was Executor. And as he truly valued, ſo he liberally rewarded his Servant's Faithfulneſs. And having thus diſcumbred himſelf of worldly Cares, he took Care for the Places he poſ-

ſeſſed, prayed for the College, that it might continue a flouriſhing Nurſery of Religion and Learning; and that GOD would furniſh *Lincolns-Inn* from Time to Time with able, preaching Miniſters, and the Lecture at *Cambridge*, that had coſt ſo much Trouble in the procuring.

THE Night before he died, being *Saturday*, he went to Bed, and lay about three Hours deſirous to ſleep, but ſlept not; then ſaid he, *My Diſſolution is at Hand, let me go to my Home, and to* Jeſus Chriſt *who hath bought me with his precious Blood:* And ſo lay ſtill as in a Slumber, till about Two o'Clock in the Morning; then drinking and reſting on his Servant's Arms, he fell into a cold and clammy Sweat; which he told them was the Meſſenger of Death: and ſo continued for about two Hours very ſilent. About Four o'Clock, he ſaid, "I feel Death coming to my Heart, my Pain ſhall now be quickly turned into Joy." At this his Friends were called, that were preſent in the Houſe, who ſpake unto him, but had no Anſwer from him as they were uſed to have. Then they all kneeled down, and a Reverend Divine there preſent prayed. When Prayer was ended, he looked on them, and aſked what Day it was, and being anſwered, that it was *Sabbath-Day*; "A fit Day (ſaid he) to be ſacrificed on: I have accompanied Saints on Earth, and now I ſhall accompany Angels in Heaven." Then turning away his Head, he preſently gave up the Ghoſt, being near Forty-one Years of Age. It was about Five o'Clock on the LORD'*s-Day*, but to him an everlaſting *Sabbath*. He never (by his good Will) reſted on that Day, ſince GOD was truly known to him till now; GOD gave him therefore an everlaſting Reſt. No Man deſerved better Funeral Solemnities: But Mr. *Dod* was much againſt it; and his Friends at *Cambridge*, who did highly honour him,

him, and desired nothing more, than to have waited on his Dust unto its long Home, were now obliged to attend the Election of another Master: So he was buried decently, but without State, in *Fawsley* Church in *Northamptonshire*, *July* 20, 1628. Mr. *Dod*, the Minister of that Place, preached a Sermon on that Occasion, to a vast Congregation of serious People, who were there assembled together.

6 JY 64

THE

Breast-Plate

OF

FAITH and LOVE;

OR, THE

GROUND AND EXERCISE OF FAITH AND LOVE,

As ſet upon CHRIST their OBJECT, and expreſs'd in GOOD WORKS, Explain'd.

IN THREE PARTS.

By *JOHN PRESTON*, D.D.

Chaplain to his MAJESTY King CHARLES I.

Maſter of *Emmanuel*-College, in CAMBRIDGE;

And ſometime Preacher of LINCOLN'S-INN.

M.DCC.LI.



TO THE

CHRISTIAN READER.

CHRISTIAN READER,

INNUMERABLE *are the Sleights of* Satan, *to hinder a Chriſtian in his Courſe towards Heaven, by exciting the Corruption of his own Heart to diſturb him, when he is about to do any Good; or by diſcouraging him with inward Terrors, when he would ſolace himſelf with heavenly Comforts; or by diſheartning him under the Fears of Sufferings, when he ſhould be reſolute in a good Cauſe. A Type whereof were the* Iſraelites, *whoſe Servitude was redoubled, when they turned themſelves to forſake* Egypt: *Wherefore we have much Need of Chriſtian Fortitude, according to that Direction:* Watch ye, ſtand faſt, quit yourſelves like Men.

BUT *as in Wars, the chief Strength of the Soldiers lieth in their Captain, ſo in ſpiritual Conflicts, all a Chriſtian's Strength is in* CHRIST, *and from Him. For, before our Converſion,* we were of no Strength: *Since our Converſion,* we are not ſufficient of our ſelves to think a good Thought. *And, to work out from the Saints all Self-Confidence,* GOD, *by their Falls,*

Falls, teacheth them, to rejoice in the LORD *Jeſus,* and to have no Confidence in the Fleſh.

WHATSOEVER CHRIST *hath for us, is made ours by* FAITH, *which is the Hand of the Soul, enriching it by receiving* CHRIST, *who is* the Treaſure hid in the Field, *and with Him, thoſe* unſearchable Riches *of Grace, which are revealed and offered in the Goſpel: Yea, it is Part of our ſpiritual Armour. That which was fabulouſly ſpoken of the Race of Giants, is truly ſaid of a Chriſtian, he is born with his Armour upon him; as ſoon as he is regenerate, he is armed. It is called a* BREAST-PLATE, *becauſe it preſerves the Heart; a* long, large Shield, *(as the Word ſignifies) which is uſeful to defend the whole Man from all Sorts of Aſſaults: Which Part of ſpiritual Armour, and how it is to be managed, is declared in the two former Parts of the enſuing Treatiſe, which was delivered in Nine Sermons.*

NOW *as all Rivers return into the Sea, whence they came, ſo the believing Soul, having received all from* CHRIST, *returneth all to* CHRIST. *For thus the Believer reaſoneth: "Was* GOD's *undeſerved Love ſuch to me, that he ſpared not his only-begotten Son, but gave Him to die for me? It is but equal that I ſhould live to Him, die for Him, bring in my Strength, Time, Gifts, Liberty, all that I have, all that I am, in his Service, to his Glory." That Affection, whence theſe Reſolutions ariſe, is called* LOVE, *which ſo inclineth the Soul, that it moveth in a direct Line towards* GOD. *And the Perfection of our Spirits cannot be but in Union with the Chief of Spirits, who communicateth his Goodneſs to the Creature, according*

to

to its Capacity. This Affection of Love, as it reflecteth upon CHRIST, *being a Fruit and Effect of his Love to us apprehended by Faith, is the Subject of the third Part of this Treatiſe, which was deliver'd in Seven Sermons.*

THE *judicious Author, out of a piercing Inſight into the Methods of the Tempter, knowing upon what Rocks the Faith of many ſuffers Shipwreck; that neither the weak Chriſtian might loſe the Comfort of his Faith, through want of Evidences, nor the Preſumptuous reſt upon a Fancy inſtead of Faith, throughout the whole Treatiſe, and more eſpecially in the laſt Sermon, diſcourſeth of* Good Works, *as they ariſe from Faith and Love. This is the Sum of the faithful and fruitful Labours of this Reverend, Learned, and Godly Miniſter of the Goſpel; who, whilſt he lived, was an Example of the Life of Faith and Love, and of Good Works, to ſo many as were acquainted with his even Walking with* GOD, *in the ſeveral Turnings and Occaſions of his Life. But it will be too much Injury to the Reader to be detained longer in the Porch. We now diſmiſs thee to the Reading of this profitable Work, beſeeching* GOD *to increaſe thy Faith, and to perfect Love in thy Heart, that thou mayſt be fruitful in Good Works.*

Thine in our LORD JESUS CHRIST,

RICHARD SIBS.

☞ All Dr. PRESTON's Sermons were Extemporary, and taken in Short-hand by thoſe that heard them, from whoſe Copies they are now printed.

THE

6 JY 64

THE

BREAST-PLATE

OF

FAITH and LOVE.

PART I.

Of FAITH.

ROM. i. 17.

For by it the Righteouſneſs of GOD *is revealed from Faith to Faith: As it is written, The Juſt ſhall live by Faith.*

IN the Words read unto you, S. *Paul* tells the *Romans*, That he is not aſhamed of the Goſpel of *Chriſt*. *For* (ſaith he) *it is the Power of* GOD *to Salvation:* It is that which, being received, will bring Men to Heaven; being rejected, will ſhut Men up in Hell, and therefore it is of no ſmall Moment. He gives a Reaſon, in theſe Words, why it is the Power of GOD to Salvation: *By it the Righteouſneſs of* GOD *is revealed:* That is, The Righ-

Righteouſneſs which is of GOD, which only GOD accepts, and by which alone Men can be ſaved, is revealed by the Goſpel, and no other Way.

BUT to what Purpoſe is this revealed, if I know not how to come by it? Many Things are revealed, but how ſhall I know that they are mine? Therefore he adds, *It is the Power of* GOD *to Salvation, to every one that believes.* As it is revealed by the Goſpel, ſo ſomething is to be done on our Part: As GOD manifeſts it, ſo you muſt receive it by Faith.

"YEA, but (ſay you) I have not ſo ſtrong a Faith, I cannot believe as I would." Well, but the Apoſtle tells us, Faith hath Degrees, *It is revealed from Faith to Faith:* That is, one receives it in one Degree, and the ſame afterward receives it in a greater Degree. All are alike juſtified, but there is a Difference in Faith; ſome is ſtronger, ſome is weaker.

THE Point to be gathered out of theſe Words, is this: *That Righteouſneſs, by which alone we can be ſaved, now in the Time of the Goſpel, is revealed and offered to all, that will take it.*

IT is not a Matter of light Moment, but an exceeding great Thing to ſee the Righteouſneſs of GOD revealed. It is the great, and glorious Myſtery of the Goſpel; which the Angels deſire to pry into, which made S. *Paul* in his Miniſtry ſo glorious, which ſwallowed up his Thoughts, that he could not tell how to expreſs it; That now, in this laſt Age, *Chriſt hath revealed* thro' us *the unſearchable Riches of his Grace.* Therefore he prays, That GOD *would open their Eyes, that they might comprehend with all the Saints, the Heighth, and Length,*

and

and Breadth of that Redemption, which *Chriſt* hath wrought for them. It paſſeth our Comprehenſion; yet he prays, That they may comprehend it in ſuch a Meaſure as is poſſible, tho' there be a Heighth, and Breadth and Depth therein, which could not be meaſured. And this is it, that is revealed to the Souls of Men; the Eſcaping of Hell and Death; ſuch free Acceſs to the Throne of Grace, as none before had; this Liberty, to be made the Sons of GOD, and Heirs of Heaven; yea, Kings and Prieſts to GOD. All this, I ſay, is now revealed, which before was not.

THIS is ſaid to be revealed, partly, becauſe this, of all other Things, was never written in the Hearts of Men. The moral Law was written therein, but they had not the leaſt Light to ſee *this*; partly, becauſe it is now opened in a larger Meaſure, than it was heretofore, in the Times of the Prophets. The Door was a little open before, but now it is wide open, and Nothing is hid from the Souls of Men, that is neceſſary for them to know. And further; it is revealed, not only in Regard of the Preachers that make it known, but likewiſe in Regard of them that hear it: For there is a greater Meaſure of the Spirit of Revelation diſpenſed under the Goſpel. Therefore, *Eph.* i. 18. the Apoſtle prays, That *the Eyes of their Underſtanding might be open'd, that they might know what is the Hope of their Calling, and the Riches of his glorious Inheritance in the Saints.* For what is it to have a Light, if their Eyes be ſhut to whom it ſhines?

AGAIN: The Thing revealed, is the Righteouſneſs, by which alone Men can be ſaved. This is the main Point; which, that you may underſtand, I will open by anſwering theſe ſix Queſtions:

I. How this Righteouſneſs of GOD, (*i. e.* which is accepted of GOD) ſaves. II. How it is offered to us. III. To whom it is offered. IV. Upon what Qualifications. V. How it is made ours. And VI. and laſtly, What is required of us, when we have it. Theſe hang one upon another, but for Memory Sake, I have thus diſtinguiſhed them.

1. How doth it ſave? I anſwer: This Righteouſneſs ſaves, after the ſame Manner that the Unrighteouſneſs of *Adam* did condemn: Let us ſet theſe two together, and the Thing will be plain.

FIRST, As *Adam* was one Man, yet the common Root of all Mankind, of whom all that are guilty of Death, and ſhall be damned, muſt be born: So *Chriſt*, the ſecond *Adam*, ſtands as a publick Perſon, and the Root of all that ſhall be ingrafted into, and born of Him. Secondly, as *Adam*'s firſt Unrighteouſneſs, the firſt Sin he committed, is communicated to Men, and made theirs by Imputation; and not ſo only, but by Inherency alſo; (for it hath bred in them original Sin:) After the ſame Manner, the Righteouſneſs that *Chriſt wrought*, is made ours by Imputation; and this imputative Righteouſneſs of *Chriſt* worketh a Righteouſneſs which is inherent in us. Laſtly, as after this Unrighteouſneſs comes Death, which reigns in us, bringing every Thing into Subjection, ſo that all the Comforts Men poſſeſs, are overcome in ſome Degree, while we live here; (all Sickneſſes, and Troubles, and Croſſes, being as ſo many Skirmiſhes, which Death hath with us, before the main Battle comes:) So in *Chriſt* Life reigns over all, and brings all into Subjection to Him: That is, It brings all the Troubles Man ſuſtaineth, all the Enemies he hath, yea, Death and

and Sin into Subjection, by Degrees in this Life, and after Death perfectly.

Now you ſee the miſerable Fruit of *Adam*'s Fall, you ſee by lamentable Experience, what original Sin is, and how much it hath corrupted us; why then ſhould you think it a ſtrange Thing, that the Righteouſneſs of *Chriſt* ſhould be imputed? Again, Death, you ſee, reigns over all by one; why then will you not believe, That Life ſhall reign over all Men; that is, bring every Enemy of ours into Subjection, by the other? For the Righteouſneſs of one ſaves, as the Unrighteouſneſs of the other condemns.

ANOTHER Expreſſion, I find in 2 *Cor.* v. 21. *As* Chriſt *was Sin for us, who knew no Sin, ſo are we made the Righteouſneſs of* GOD *in Him:* That is, tho' *Chriſt* was a Man without Sin in Himſelf, yet our Sin was imputed to Him, and He was by GOD reckoned as a Sinner; and then He kills Him, putting our Curſe upon Him; ſo to us that are free from Righteouſneſs, *Chriſt* is made Righteouſneſs; ſo that GOD looks on us as if we had performed perfect Righteouſneſs; and when that is done, he ſaves us. And ſo much for the firſt Queſtion.

2. BUT when we hear that this Righteouſneſs ſaves, the Queſtion is, "How ſhall we come by it? How ſhall we get a Share in the Salvation?"

I ANSWER, It is freely given to us, even as Fathers give Lands to their Children. And as Kings give Pardons, and Titles, and Honours, and Riches, out of their Clemency, becauſe they will, to ſhew their Magnificence and Goodneſs to their Subjects; ſo doth GOD give this Righteouſneſs: As you ſhall find it expreſs'd, *Iſai.* ix. 6. *To Us*

a Child is born, to Us a Son is given. And *John* iii. 16. GOD *ſo loved the World, that He gave his only begotten Son.* And *Rom.* v. 17, it is called *the Gift of Righteouſneſs:* That is, a Thing which GOD freely, voluntarily, and only becauſe He will, beſtows on Men, not looking on any Worthineſs in them of the ſame. *If through the Offence of one, Death reigned in all, much more they which receive Abundance of Grace, and the Gift of Righteouſneſs, ſhall reign in Life by one* Jeſus Chriſt. So that GOD gives it freely out of his mere Love, without any other Motive or End, but to ſhew his Magnificence, and to make manifeſt, in the Ages to come, the unſearchable Riches of *Chriſt*; the great and exceeding glorious Riches, that He hath provided for them that love Him.

BUT what is the Reaſon that GOD will have it communicated to the Sons of Men no other Way but by Gift? You ſhall ſee, *Rom* iv. 5, that it is for theſe Cauſes: Firſt, *That no Man might boaſt in himſelf, but that he that rejoiceth, may rejoice in the* LORD. If any other Manner of Conveyance had been made, we ſhould have had Something to boaſt of; but coming merely from GOD as a Gift, we have Cauſe to glory in GOD, and nothing elſe. Again, it is a Gift, that Men may learn to depend upon GOD for it. GOD will have no Man challenge it as his Due; for it is a meere Grace. Laſtly, it is a Gift, *that it may be ſure to all the Seed.* If there had been any Thing required at our Hands, (as, This do; Fulfill this Law, and you ſhall have this Righteouſneſs:) It had not been ſure; nay none had been ſaved; for by the Law is Tranſgreſſion and Wrath: But being by Gift, it is firm and ſure to all the Seed: For when a Thing is freely given, and nothing expected, but Taking it, and Thankſgiving for it, what is more ſure.

3. BUT

3. BUT, when you hear this Righteouſneſs is given, the next Queſtion will be, "To whom is it given? If it be only given to ſome, what Comfort is this to me?"

IT is given to every Man; there is not a Man excepted: For this we have the ſure Word of GOD, which will not fail. When you have the Charter of a King well confirmed, you reckon it a Matter of great Moment: What is it then, when you have the Charter of GOD Himſelf? which you ſhall evidently ſee in thoſe two Places, *Mark* xvi. 15. *Go and preach the Goſpel to every Creature under Heaven.* What is that? Go and tell every Man without Exception, that there is good News for him; *Chriſt* is dead for him, and if he will take Him, and accept of his Righteouſneſs, he ſhall have it; reſtrain it not, but go and tell every Man under Heaven. The other Text is, *Rev.* xxii. 17. *Whoſoever will, let him come, and take of the Waters of Life freely.* Whoſoever will come, (none excepted) may have Life, and it ſhall coſt him nothing. Many other Places of Scripture there are, to prove the Generality of the Offer: And having a ſure Word for it, conſider it.

4. THE next Thing a Man will deſire to know, is this; "What Qualifications are expected? Doth not GOD require to find ſomething in us, if He give it us?"

I ANSWER, that it is offered to all, and no Qualification at all is required as pre-exiſtent to be found in us, but any may come and take it. GOD requires no Qualification as concerning our Sins: He ſaith not, you ſhall be pardoned, ſo your Sins be of ſuch a Number, or of ſuch a Nature; but though they be never ſo many, though of never ſo

extraordinary a Nature, though they may be aggravated with all the Circumſtances that can be, yet there is no Exception at all of you; the Pardon runs in general Terms, *This is the Lamb of* GOD *that taketh away the Sins of the World.* And ſeeing it is in general Terms, why will you reſtrain it? You ſee it runs in general, and ſo you may take it. And as it is propounded generally, ſo it is generally executed, 1 *Cor.* vi. 9. You ſhall find the greateſt Sins that can be named, are there pardoned: *Be not deceived,* you know that *no Fornicator, nor Adulterer, nor unclean Perſon ſhall enter into the Kingdom of* GOD, *and ſuch were ſome of you: But now you are waſhed, now you are ſanctified, now you are juſtified.* Though they had committed the greateſt Sins, you ſee, it is generally executed without Exception.

BUT there is another Sort of Qualification. "Is there not ſomething firſt to be done? I know that though I have committed all the Sins of the World, yet they ſhall not prejudice my Pardon; but I muſt do ſomething to qualify me for it." No, not any Thing as precedent to the Pardon: It is only required of thee, to come with the Hand of Faith, and receive it. In the midſt of all thy Unworthineſs, whatſoever it be, lay hold on the Pardon, and embrace it, and it ſhall be thine.

BUT you will object, "Then to what End is the Doctrine of Humiliation? To what End is the Law preached to be a School-maſter, if no Qualification be required?" I anſwer, Humiliation is not required as a Qualification: For no Tears of ours can give Satisfaction; neither is it any Part of Sanctification.

BUT how is it required then? As that without which we will not come to *Chriſt.* As for Exam-

ple: If we ſay to a Man, The Phyſician is ready to heal you; before you will be healed, you muſt have a Senſe of your Sickneſs: This Senſe is not required by the Phyſician; (for the Phyſician is ready to heal him:) But if he be not ſick, and have a Senſe of it, he will not come to the Phyſician. If at a general Feaſt it be proclaimed, let all come hither that be hungry; a Man is not excluded, if he be not hungry; but if he be not, he will not come; therefore we preach, that none receive the Goſpel but the Poor, thoſe that be humble, and touched with Senſe of Sin and Wrath; and we preach ſo, becauſe indeed no Man will come but he that is ſo.

5. IN the next Place, the Queſtion will be, "How is this Righteouſneſs of *Chriſt* made ours?" or, "what is to be done of him to Whom it belongs?"

To this I anſwer; though no precedent Qualification be required, yet this muſt be taken: A Man muſt not reflect on himſelf, and conſider, Am I worthy of it? but he muſt take it as a Plaiſter, which if it be not applied, will not heal; or as Meat, which if it be not eaten, doth not nouriſh. As the Huſband wooes his Spouſe, and ſays thus, "I require nothing at thy Hands, no Condition at all: I do not examine whether thou art wealthy, or no; whether thou be fair, or no; it is no Matter what thou art: I require thee ſimply to take me for thy Huſband." After this Manner comes *Chriſt* to us. We muſt not ſay, Am I worthy to make a Spouſe for *Chriſt?* Am I fit to receive ſo great Mercies? Thou art only to take Him. When we exclude all Conditions, we exclude ſuch a Frame of Mind, which we think is neceſſarily required to make us worthy to take Him.

Him. As if a Phyſician come and offer thee a Medicine, by which thou mayſt be healed, and ſay, I require nothing at your Hands, only, to drink it, for elſe it will do you no Good: So GOD offers the Righteouſneſs of *Chriſt*, which is that which heals the Soul of Men: GOD looks for nothing at your Hands; it matters not what your Perſon is, only you muſt take it.

BUT when you hear you muſt take it, the Queſtion will be, What this Taking is?

I ANSWER, This Taking is nothing elſe but that which we call *Faith*; and therefore that we may not err in the main Point, I will declare what Faith is. And it is nothing elſe but this, when theſe two Things concur, that GOD the Father will give his Son, and freely offers Righteouſneſs, and we receive this Righteouſneſs, taking *Chriſt* for our Huſband, our King and LORD.

BUT you will ſay, Faith is more: It is an Act of the Underſtanding, aſſenting to Truths for the Authority of the Speaker; therefore the Mind and Will muſt concur to make up this Faith.

FOR the better Underſtanding of it, mark this Word; *The Righteouſneſs of* GOD *is revealed:* Wherein it is likewiſe imply'd, (tho' it be not expreſs'd) that it is offered: For to what Purpoſe is it to ſee that there is ſuch a Righteouſneſs, if it be nothing to us? But it is ſo revealed, that it is alſo offered. Now, being both revealed and offered, you muſt find Something in Men anſwerable to both theſe: 1. To the Revelation of it, the Underſtanding muſt anſwer, aſſenting to it as a Truth, That *Chriſt* is come in the Fleſh, and offered to all Men: And 2. To anſwer to the Offer, there muſt be

be an Act of the Will, whereby it comes and takes this Righteouſneſs. Both theſe, 1 *Tim.* i. 15, are put together; *This is a faithful Saying, and worthy to be received, that* Jeſus Chriſt *came into the World to ſave Sinners.* It is true, ſaith the Underſtanding, and therefore believes it; it is worthy to be received ſaith the Will, therefore comes, and accepts it. In Matter of Marriage, if one come and tell a Woman: "There is ſuch a Man that is willing to beſtow himſelf on you, if you will take him, and accept him for your Huſband:" To make up the Marriage on her Part, ſhe muſt firſt believe, That this Meſſage is true; that there is ſuch a Man, and that *that* Man is willing to have her. This is an Act of her Underſtanding. But will you take him, and accept him for your Huſband? Now comes the Will: And the Concurrence of theſe Two makes up the Match. So we come and tell you, There is ſuch a One, the *Meſſiah*, that is willing to beſtow himſelf on you; if you believe, that we deliver the Meſſage from *Chriſt*, and do conſequently embrace and take Him, you are now juſtified; this is the very Tranſlation of you from Death to Life; at this very Inſtant you are delivered from *Satan*, and Salvation is come to your Houſe.

NOW, becauſe this Taking of *Chriſt*, is the main Point, which makes *Chriſt* ours, and the Want thereof is the Cauſe that every Man is condemn'd, we muſt tell you, what is required therein, that you may know what it is. And Firſt, There muſt not be an Error of the Perſon. Secondly, You muſt underſtand aright what this Taking is. Thirdly, There a compleat, deliberate Will muſt concur to this Action of Taking. And theſe three Particulars being declared, we ſhall not eaſily be deceived in the Matter.

FIRST,

FIRST, When you hear of this Righteouſneſs of *Chriſt*, and of its being made ours; you muſt know, That firſt *Chriſt* Himſelf is made ours, and then his Righteouſneſs: As you muſt firſt have the Huſband, and then the Benefits that come by him. I ſay then, Take Heed that there be not an Error of the Perſon; that you miſtake him not. Therefore, when you come to make this Marriage, you muſt know, that *Chriſt* is moſt holy, that He is alſo ſuch a One as will bring Perſecution with him; (as he ſays of Himſelf, that He knows not where to lay his Head;) ſuch a One, as for whoſe Sake you muſt part with every Thing; ſuch a One as for whoſe Sake you muſt be hated. Some would have the Man, but they know not the Man; and ſo many Thouſands are deceiv'd, that are willing to take *Chriſt*, but they know not what they take; they underſtand not *Chriſt* aright: There is an Error of the Perſon, and ſo a Miſs of the Match, and conſequently of Juſtification: For, they take Him not ſo as to make Him their LORD; ſo, as to be ſubject unto Him; they do not conſider, that He requires ſuch Things at their Hands. And this excludes all ignorant Men, who take not *Chriſt* indeed, but only in their own Fancy.

SECONDLY, If there be no Miſtake of the Perſon, yet what is this Taking? In Marriage there is a certain Form to be obſerved; and if that Form be miſs'd of, then the Match is miſs'd. This Taking then is only this; ſo to take Him, as to be divorc'd from all other Lovers; ſo to ſerve Him, as that you ſerve no other Maſter; ſo to be ſubject to Him, as that you be ſubject to Nothing in the World beſides. This is properly to take *Chriſt*: And this excludes the greateſt Part of Men, who are ready to take *Chriſt*, and yet they love the World too:

too; For GOD ſays, *If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father, and of the Son, is not in him.* You muſt have your Affections weaned from every Kind of Vanity. Go through the whole Univerſe, look on all the Things that are therein; Riches, Pleaſures, and Honours, Wife, and Children; if your Heart be not weaned from every of them, you take Him not as a Huſband. All thoſe likewiſe are excluded, who will ſerve *Chriſt* and their Riches too, their Credit too, their Praiſe with Men too: For *Chriſt* tells them, no Man can ſerve both. You muſt ſerve Him alone, and be obedient to none but Him. If you do ſo, you take Him for your LORD indeed. So likewiſe, many will be ſubject to Him as a King, but they will be ſubject to their Luſts too. If their Luſts command them, they cannot deny them: Some they will reſerve: And you know how many this excludes. *If ye receive the Praiſe of Men, how can ye believe?* John v. 44. That is, if you be not weaned and divorced from all, you cannot believe. Tho' you be the Off-ſcouring of Men, tho' you be mocked and ſcorned, it matters not; but if you ſeek the Praiſe of Men, you cannot believe. While you ſeek the Praiſe of Men, how can you take Me for your GOD and LORD, to ſerve Me altogether? So that to take *Chriſt* with a juſtifying Faith, is nothing elſe but to receive Him, as it is expreſs'd in many Places of Scripture, *Joh.* i. 11. *He came unto his own, and his own received Him not; but to as many as received Him, He gave Power to become the Sons of* GOD, *even to them that believe on his Name.* And ſo it is not (as the *Papiſts* ſay) a meer Act of the Underſtanding, but a Taking of Him for your GOD and Saviour, to whom alone you will be ſubject.

THIRDLY

THIRDLY and Laſtly, When theſe Two are done, ſo that there is no Error, either in the Perſon, or the Form of Taking, there is yet one Thing more remains, and that is, To take and accept Him with a compleat, a deliberate, and true Will. For, even as in other Matches, ſuppoſing the Perſon be known, and the Form duly obſerved, yet if there do not concur a compleat Will, it is not properly a Match: And therefore thoſe Matches are unlawful, which are made before Years of Diſcretion, or when a Man is in a Phrenzy, becauſe there is then no compleat or deliberate Will; ſo in this ſpiritual Match, you ſhall ſee how many the Want of ſuch a Will excludes.

FIRST, I ſay, it muſt be compleat; which excludes all, that prize *Chriſt* a little, that could be content to have *Chriſt*, but it is rather an Inclination than a compleat Will; that would have *Chriſt*, but not yet; that would live a little longer at Eaſe, and have a little more Wealth, but are not come to a reſolute, peremptory Will; that have only a weak Inclination, which is not enough.

AGAIN, It muſt be a deliberate Will; and this excludes all thoſe, that will take *Chriſt* in a good Mood, on ſome ſudden Flaſh, when they are affected at a good Sermon, and have ſome good Motions in their Minds; that will (at ſuch a Time) be content to take *Chriſt*, to ſerve Him, obey Him, and to forſake their Sins; whoſe Will is not deliberate, but they ſuddenly chooſe, and as ſuddenly refuſe *Chriſt*.

LAST of all, As it muſt be compleat and deliberate, ſo it muſt be a true Will; that is, it muſt be free; and that excludes all them, that merely for ſervile Fear, at Time of Death, in the Day of

of Sickneſs and Trouble, will take *Chriſt*. Indeed, you can ſcarce come to any, but, in ſuch a Caſe, he will profeſs, that he is content to take *Chriſt* for his LORD and Saviour; but this is done by Conſtraint, and ſo the Will is not free. So I ſay, when the Will is compleat, deliberate and free, in the Choice of *Chriſt*, the Match is made, and you are juſtified.

6. AND Laſtly: But after the Match is made, Something is required. Therefore there is one Queſtion more; and that is, What is this that is required after Making of the Match?

I ANSWER, 1. It is required that you love your Huſband *Jeſus Chriſt*, that you forſake Father and Mother, and become one Spirit with Him, as a Man is one Fleſh with his Wife: for you are now Bone of his Bone, and Fleſh of his Fleſh. 2. Again, it is required that you ſhould repent; and walk no longer after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit. You muſt have your Fleſh crucified, with all the Affections and Luſts of it. 3. You muſt part with every Thing for his Sake; whether it be Riches, Honours, or Credit, or whatſoever it be, you muſt be ready to let all go. 4. You muſt be ready to undergo any Thing for his Sake. You muſt take Him for worſe, as well as for better. *You muſt be contented to be hated of all Men for his Sake. You muſt take up your Croſs, and follow Him.* 5. You muſt do much, as well as ſuffer much for Him. He died to this End, *that He might purchaſe to Himſelf a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.* You muſt reſpect him as a Wife doth her Huſband, not as a Servant doth a hard Maſter. You muſt not look on his Commandments as a hard Taſk, but as one that hath his Heart inflamed to walk in them; as a loving Wife, that needs not to be bidden to

do this or that; but if the doing of it may advantage her Huſband, it will be a greater Grief to her to let it lie undone.

BUT now Men ſay, "This is a hard Condition, I little thought of it." It is true, the Condition is hard, and that is the Reaſon that ſo few are willing to come in. They ſtart back when they underſtand theſe after-clap Conditions; that they muſt part with all; that they muſt be perſecuted; that their Will muſt be perfectly ſubject to the Will of *Chriſt*; that they muſt be holy as He is holy; that the ſame Mind muſt be in them that is in *Chriſt Jeſus*; that they muſt be of thoſe peculiar People of GOD. And therefore we have told you, that none will come in to take *Chriſt* for their Huſband, till they be *heavy laden*, and have felt the Weight of *Satan*'s Yoke: Till then they will not come under the Yoke of *Chriſt*. Thoſe that be humble, that have their Hearts broken, that know what the Wrath of GOD is, that have their Conſciences awaken'd to ſee Sin, will come in, and be glad to have *Chriſt*, tho' on theſe Conditions; but the other will not. If you will have *Chriſt* on theſe Conditions, you may. But we preach moſtly in vain. The greateſt Part of the World refuſes *Chriſt*; becauſe they will not leave their Covetouſneſs and Idleneſs, their Sports and Pleaſures; they will not do the Things that *Chriſt* requires at their Hands; and all becauſe they are not humbled, they know not what Sin means: Whereas, ſhould GOD ſhew it to them in its right Colours, were their Conſciences enlightened, they would take Him with all their Heart

BUT another Objection comes in; "I would come in, but how ſhall I do it? I want Power and Ability, I cannot mortify the Deeds of the Body."

Body." To this I give a ſpeedy Anſwer: If thou canſt come with this Reſolution to take *Chriſt*, take no Care for the other: For as ſoon as thou art his, He will give thee another Spirit, He will enable thee to do all Things. It is true, with thy own Heart thou art not able to do it; but what if GOD give thee a new Heart, and a new Spirit? When the Match is concluded between Him and us, he ſends his Spirit into our Hearts, and this Spirit gives us Ability, making us like *Chriſt*, and cauſing us to delight in the Duties of New Obedience. Therefore take not Care for Ability, only labour for an honeſt Heart, armed with this Reſolution; "I am reſolved to take *Chriſt* from henceforth;" and you ſhall find another Spirit to enable you.

AND now, that we may not let all this go without ſome Application, we will hereof make two Uſes.

THE firſt great Uſe to be made of it, is to learn hence to ſee how great the Sin of Men is, and how juſt is their Condemnation for the ſame, that when this *Righteouſneſs of* GOD *is revealed* from Heaven, they deſpiſe theſe glad Tidings of Salvation. This very Thing that we preach to you, is the greateſt Work that ever GOD did. Therefore, if you reject it, know that your Sin is exceeding great.

WE that preach the Goſpel, are Meſſengers ſent from the Father, to invite every one of you to come to the Marriage of his Son: If you will not come, (as ſome of you are young, and mind other Things; others of you have gone long in an old Tract, and will not turn; ſome have married a Wife; others have other Buſineſs, and therefore you will not come): I ſay, if you refuſe, the LORD will deal with you, as with them in the Goſpel,

He will have you brought and ſlain before his Face. And we come not from the Father only, but we are alſo ſent from the Son; He is a Suitor to you, and hath diſpatched us as Ambaſſadors to wooe you, and *to beſeech you to be reconciled.* If you will come, He hath made known his Mind to you; you may have Him: If you will not come, you will make Him angry: And you had need to *kiſs the Son leſt He be angry.* Though He be ſo merciful, as *not to quench the ſmoaking Flax, nor to break the bruiſed Reed*; yet notwithſtanding, that Son hath *Feet like burning Braſs: He hath a two-edged Sword in his Hand, and his Eyes are like a Flame of Fire:* So you ſhall find Him to be, if you refuſe Him. Take all the Sins you have committed, there is none like this, none ſhall be ſo much laid to your Charge at the Day of Judgment, as your Rejecting the Son, and of his Righteouſneſs, revealed and freely offered to you.

THEREFORE, when you hear the Offer of *Chriſt*, let every Man examine himſelf how he ſtands affected unto it. For all Hearers are divided into theſe two Sorts: Some are worthy, and ſome are unworthy. As when *Chriſt* ſent away his Diſciples, *If any were worthy, their Peace was to reſt upon them*, if they were not worthy, they were to *ſhake off the Duſt of their Feet againſt that City.* I ſay, conſider if you be worthy of this Righteouſneſs: For if you find your Hearts to long after it, if you prize it much, ſo that you can reckon all Things as Droſs and Dung in Compariſon of it, and will ſell all to buy this Pearl, then are you worthy: But if, when you hear it, you neglect it, and attend unto it coldly, you are unworthy; and againſt ſuch we are to ſhake off the Duſt of our Feet: That is, GOD ſhall ſhake you off as Duſt, when

when you come for Salvation to Him at the Day of Judgment.

IF in Examination you find yourſelves unworthy, then give no Reſt to yourſelves, but enter into a ſerious Conſideration of your Sins, attend on GOD's Ordinances, make Uſe of all that hath been delivered concerning Humiliation, and give not over until you have attained this eager Deſire after *Chriſt*. Indeed this is wrought by GOD Himſelf, but give not you over. This is what St. *John* calls *Drawing (None can come to me, except the Father* draw *him)*: And that is done, when GOD gives another Will; when, on the propounding of *Chriſt*, He gives the Nature of a Lamb, changing the Heart, and working ſuch an Inclination to *Chriſt*, as is in the Iron to follow the Loadſtone. If Nothing will make thee give over, if thou wilt beſeech Him, and give Him no Reſt, I'll aſſure thee, GOD cannot deny thee; and the longer He holdeth thee off, the beſt Anſwer thou ſhalt have in the End: And when thou haſt *Chriſt*, thou haſt that which cannot be expreſſed; for, with Him thou haſt *all Things*.

I PROCEED now to the ſecond Uſe that is to be made of this Doctrine; which is this: Conſider what it is to refuſe, yea what it is to defer your Acceptance of it. GOD may take your Deferring for a Denial. You that think, "Well, I will take it, but not yet;" take Heed leſt you never have ſuch an Opportunity again. I ſay, be exhorted, be moved, to take it. This I ſpeak to you that be humble, to ſo many among you as have broken Hearts. Others may take Him if they will; but they will not; they mind not this Doctrine, they regard not Things of this Nature; they will take Him (if they can) when they lye a Dying; but now they have

ſomething elſe to do. But you that *mourn in Sion*, you that have broken Hearts, that know the Bitterneſs of Sin, to ſuch as you is this Word of Salvation ſent. Others have nothing to do with it: Not but that Others ſhall have Him, if they will come; but they will not take Him on ſuch Conditions. It may be, they would have Redemption, and Salvation by Him; but they will not take Him for their King. They that be humble, that have their Hearts wounded with the Senſe of Sin, are willing to take Him on his own Terms, to keep his Commandments, and not to think them grievous; to bear his Burden, and think it light; to take his Yoke, and count it eaſy; to give all they have for Him, and think all too little; to ſuffer Perſecution for his Sake, and rejoice in it; to be content to be ſcoffed at, and hated of Men; to do, to ſuffer any Thing for his Sake; and when all this is done, to regard it as Nothing, to reckon themſelves *unprofitable Servants*, to account of all as not worthy of Him. Therefore be not you ſhy in taking of Him, for you have free Liberty.

BUT, before I diſmiſs you, let me ſpeak a Word to you that be not yet humble. Let me beſeech you to conſider three Things to move you to take *Chriſt*. 1. The great Danger that is in not taking of Him. If you could be well without Him, you might ſit ſtill as you are; but you ſhall die for Want of Him. When a Man's Caſe is this; "I ſee without *Chriſt* I muſt periſh; I muſt looſe my Life; that is the Penalty, ſuch is the Danger if I refuſe Him;" methinks this ſhould move him.

2. CONSIDER the Benefit of taking Him, as well as the Danger of refuſing Him. If you will have Him, you ſhall with Him have a Kingdom. You ſhall change for the better; for whatſoever you part with

with for his Sake, you ſhall have an hundred-fold for it in this Life. If you forego any Pleaſure, you ſhall have for it the Joy of the Holy Ghoſt, far exceeding it. If you part with Riches, you ſhall be truly rich in the Treaſures of another World. If you loſe Friends, you ſhall have GOD for your Friend, and ſhall be a Favourite in the Court of Heaven.

3. THIRDLY, conſider that you ſhall be ſure to have Him; you ſhall not be deceived: for GOD hath declared that to be his Will; and it ſtands now with his Juſtice, as well as with his Mercy, to give *Chriſt*. His Word is a Corner-Stone, and you may build on it. Nay, *by two immutable Things* he hath confirmed it; his Word and his Oath: And *Heaven and Earth may paſs, but they ſhall not paſs:* You may build on them, to have *Chriſt*, and Salvation by Him. When *Paul* had delivered GOD's Mind to the *Galatians*, he declares, that if an Angel from Heaven ſhould tell them the Foundation was ſandy; nay, if he himſelf ſhould preach another Doctrine, they were not to believe him. Therefore if you will take Him and have Him, *truſt* perfectly *in the Grace that is revealed by* Jeſus Chriſt: do it not by Halves; ſaying with thyſelf, It may be I ſhall be ſaved, it may be not: Thou mayeſt build on it, thou mayeſt venture thy Life on it.

ALL theſe Things being now conſidered, the great Danger in refuſing, the ineſtimable Benefit in accepting, and the Certainty of enjoying *Chriſt*, if we are throughly willing; then venture on Him. Why do you ſtand off? What can we ſay more to perſwade you? If you will take him, and his Righteouſneſs, you may have it. GOD hath committed this to us; *what we looſe on Earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven*. He hath given us the Keys of Heaven and

and Hell, and if we open the Gates of Heaven to any, they ſhall ſtand open; and now in the Preaching of the Word, the Gates of Heaven ſtand open to every one of you. Therefore come in while it is called To-Day, before the Sun ſet on you, as you know not how ſoon it may be. Indeed, if we had not made the Offer, the Danger had been ours, and we ſhould have periſhed for your Sakes: but ſeeing we have *made manifeſt the whole Counſel of* GOD, *we are now free from the Blood of every one of you:* For we have made known the Will of GOD to the full. You know what is offered to you; and if you take Him not, your Blood ſhall be upon your own Heads. Therefore conſider whether you will take Him or refuſe Him. This is the Queſtion, "Will you take Him or not take Him?" You that now refuſe and ſlight this Offer, the Day may come, when you would be glad to have it.

YOU that are now in the Bloom of your Youth, and you that are more antient, living in Health and Wealth, you have other Things to take up your Minds, but the Time will come, when the Bridegroom ſhall enter in, and the Doors ſhall be ſhut, when your Hour-Glaſs ſhall be out, and your Time ſpent, and then what we now offer, ſhall be reckon'd glad Tidings: But take Heed that it be not too late, beware leſt you cry and GOD refuſe to hear. Not but that GOD will hear every Man, if his Cry come from unfeigned Faith and Love; but it may be, GOD will not give it you when you are come to that Extremity. Seeing you would not come when He called, it may be He will not come when you call. It may be He will not breathe the Breath of Life, nor give ſuch a Spirit and Diſpoſition as He will accept of. *Chriſt* died to purchaſe to Himſelf a peculiar People zealous of good Works: He died for this End, that Men might do Him Service: And if you will not come in, in

Time

Time of Strength and Youth, when you are able to do Him ſervice; (I ſay in his ordinary Courſe) He will reject you in your Extremity: You may not then expect Mercy at his Hands. Therefore do not ſay, I will follow my Covetouſneſs, and Idleneſs, my Pleaſures and Buſineſs, my Luſts and Humours, and hereafter come in; for you are not to chuſe your own Time. If he call you, and you refuſe to come, take Heed leſt in his Wrath He ſwear that you ſhall not enter into his Reſt.

THE next Point, that theſe Words afford us, is this; That, *Faith is that whereby the Righteouſneſs of* GOD *is made ours to Salvation.*

THE Righteouſneſs of GOD (ſaith the Apoſtle) is *revealed from Faith to Faith:* That is, it is ſo revealed and offer'd by GOD, that it is made ours by Faith; we are made Partakers of it by Faith.

NOW for the Opening of this Point to you, you muſt underſtand, That there are two Ways or Covenants, whereby GOD offereth Salvation to Men. One is the Covenant of Works, and that was that Righteouſneſs, by which *Adam* had been ſaved, if he had ſtood in his Innocency; for it was that Way that GOD appointed for him, *Do this, and live.* But *Adam* perform'd not the Condition of that Covenant, and therefore now there is another Covenant, that is, the Covenant of Grace. This is thus expreſs'd, *To him which worketh not, but believeth in Him which juſtifieth the Ungodly, his Faith is accounted Righteouſneſs*, Rom. iv. 5. (Mark it) *To him that believeth on Him that juſtifieth the Ungodly*; that is, There is a certain Righteouſneſs that *Chriſt* hath prepared or purchaſed for Men; and tho' they be ungodly, he requires Nothing of them, but only, that they take it.

NOW

NOW he that will believe GOD, that He hath prepar'd this Righteouſneſs for him, and will receive it, it is enough to make him a righteous Man in GOD's Acceptation; ſo that this is the only Way now by which Men ſhall be ſaved. The Work is already done on *Chriſt*'s Part. There is the Righteouſneſs that GOD hath prepar'd, which is therefore called, *The Righteouſneſs of* GOD; and there is Nothing precedently required on our Part, but Taking and Applying of it.

BUT, you will ſay, Is there Nothing elſe required of us? Muſt GOD do all, and muſt we do Nothing, but only take that Righteouſneſs that is prepared for us? I anſwer, It is true indeed, we muſt lead a religious, ſober, and righteous Life; for, *for this End hath the Grace of* GOD *appeared.* Yet you muſt remember withall, that we cannot work this Holineſs in ourſelves; that muſt be GOD's Work altogether. We are only to take this Righteouſneſs, and the other is but a Conſequence that followeth upon it. To illuſtrate this unto you by a Similitude: A Wheel or a Bowl runneth, not that it may be made round; that is the Buſineſs of the Workman, who makes it round, that it may run: So it is in this Caſe, GOD doth not look, that we ſhould bring Holineſs with us, for we have it not to bring: We are at the firſt only to believe, and accept this Righteouſneſs that is offer'd us: When that is done, it is GOD's Part to frame us, and faſhion us for an holy Life.

WE read, *Eph.* ii. 10. *We are* GOD's *Workmanſhip, faſhioned in* Chriſt Jeſus, *to walk in Good Works, which He hath ordained.* Mark it: It is not an Action of our own: GOD is the Workman; we are the Materials, as the Clay and the Wood, that He takes into his Hands. When we have

but

but taken this Righteouſneſs that is offer'd, it is GOD's Work to caſt us into a new Mould; to give us a new Heart, and to frame a new Spirit within us, that ſo we may walk in Good Works before Him. This is the great Myſtery of Godlineſs: And we have much Ado to perſwade Men to believe, that the Righteouſneſs prepared by *Chriſt* ſhould be offer'd to them, and Nothing be required but Receiving of it. This will not ſink into the Hearts of Men by Nature. They think they muſt do Something precedently, or elſe this Righteouſneſs is not offer'd them. But, my Beloved, we muſt learn to believe, and know, that it is the Work of GOD, to ſanctify us, after He hath juſtified us, and not before.

IN many Things indeed, there is ſtill ſome precedent Actions of our own required, to gain this or that Habit or Ability; as, in the learning of Arts and Sciences, or to write well, there is ſome Action of our own required for it, and then we get the Ability to do it. But then, beſides theſe, there are other Habits, that are planted by Nature in us; as, an Ability to hear, to ſee and taſte. Now, we need not any Action of our own for the Attaining of them, becauſe they are planted in us by Nature. So it is in theſe Things that belong to Salvation. We may indeed get Habits of moral Virtues, by Labour and Pains of our own; there are Actions of our own required to them; and in that the Philoſopher ſaid right, that *we learn to be Temperate, and Sober, and Chaſte:* But for the Graces of the Spirit, it is not ſo. Thoſe Habits that Nature hath planted in us, we exerciſe them naturally, without doing any Action of our own to attain them; as we do not by ſeeing oft, learn to ſee, but it is a Faculty naturally planted in us: So it is in all the Works that we muſt do, which

are

are the Way to Salvation; GOD works them in us, He infuſeth theſe Habits into us. Therefore this Concluſion is good, that it is Faith alone, by which this Righteouſneſs is made ours to Salvation.

THIS is evident by the Apoſtle, *Gal.* ii. 21. *If Righteouſneſs had been by the Works of the Law, then* Chriſt *had died in vain.* As if he had ſaid, Salvation muſt needs come one of theſe two Ways: Either by Something that we do ourſelves, ſome Actions that we ourſelves have wrought; Or elſe it muſt come merely by Faith. Now if it had been attainable by any Work of our own, *Chriſt* died in vain: As if he ſhould ſay; *Chriſt* could have given you Ability to do thoſe Works without his Dying; but for this very Cauſe *Chriſt* came into the World, and died, that He might work Righteouſneſs, and make Satisfaction to GOD: So that you have Nothing to do for the firſt Attaining of it, but to receive it by Faith.

AND if you would know the Reaſon, why GOD, who might have found out other Ways to lead Men to Salvation, yet hath choſen this Way, above all others, (To receive the Righteouſneſs of *Chriſt*, which He hath wrought for us, only by Faith) you ſhall find theſe Four Reaſons for it in the Scriptures: Two of them are ſet down, *Rom.* iv. 16. *Therefore it is by Faith, that it might come by Grace.* This is one Reaſon why GOD will have it by Faith, *that it might be of Grace:* For if any Thing had been wrought by us (as he ſaith in the Beginning of the Chapter) it muſt have been given as Wages, and ſo it had been received by Debt, and not by Favour; but this was GOD's End in it, to make known the exceeding Length and Breadth of his Love, and how *unſearchable the Riches of* Chriſt

Chriſt *are*. His End was to have his Grace magnified. Now, if there had been any Action of ours required, but merely the Receiving of it by Faith, it had not been merely of Grace. For Faith empties a Man; it takes a Man quite off his own Bottom. Faith cometh as an empty Hand, and receiveth all from GOD, and gives all to GOD. Now GOD would have Salvation received by Faith only, that it might be acknowledged to be free, and to be altogether of Grace.

SECONDLY, As it is by Faith, that it might come by Grace, ſo it is thus alſo, *that it might be ſure*; *that the Promiſe might be ſure*. If it had been any other Way, it had never been ſure. Suppoſe that GOD had put us upon the Condition of Obedience, and had given us Grace and Ability, as He did to *Adam*; yet the Law is ſtrict, and the leaſt Failing would have cauſed Death. But now, when the Righteouſneſs that ſaveth us, is wrought already by GOD, and offer'd to us by Him, and offer'd freely, and that the Ground of this Offer is the ſure Word of GOD; we may build infallibly upon it.

THIRDLY, it is by Faith, *that it might be to all the Seed*; not only to thoſe that are of the Law, but alſo to them which were Strangers to the Law. If it had been by the Law, then Salvation had been ſhut up within the Compaſs of the *Jews*; for the *Gentiles* were Strangers to the Law of GOD, they were unclean Men, ſhut out from the Common-Wealth of *Iſrael:* But when it is now freely propounded in the Goſpel, and nothing is required but only Faith to lay Hold upon it; when there is no more looked for but Believing, and Receiving; hence it comes to be to *all the Seed*.

THE laſt Reaſon why it is of Faith, is, that no Man might boaſt, *that no Fleſh might rejoice in itſelf:* For if it had been by any other Means, by any Thing done in ourſelves, we had had Cauſe to rejoice in ourſelves. But, for this Cauſe, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* i. 30. Chriſt *is made to us Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption, that he that rejoiceth, might rejoice in the* LORD.

IF GOD had given us a Wiſdom of our own, we had had Cauſe to have rejoiced in ourſelves; but as we are mere *Darkneſs*, *Epheſ.* v. 8. and there is nothing but Fooliſhneſs and Weakneſs in us, and we have Wiſdom only in Him, *no Fleſh can glory in his Preſence.* Again, if we had had Grace put into ourſelves, for which GOD might have accepted us, the Fleſh would have boaſted; therefore *his* Righteouſneſs is made *ours.* But, when this is done, yet, if after Juſtification it had been in our Power to have performed the Works of Sanctification by any Strength of our own, we ſhould yet have been ready to boaſt thereof. Therefore *Chriſt is made Sanctification* too; ſo that *we are not able to think a good Thought*, we are not able to do the leaſt good Thing without Him: *It is, I* (ſaith the LORD) *that do ſanctify you:* It is I that do act every Grace: It is I that do put your Hearts into a good Frame. *Chriſt is made Sanctification to us*; ſo that take a holy Man after he is juſtified, it is *Chriſt* that ſanctifieth him, and that carries him through his Life in an holy and righteous Converſation. And all this is done that *no Fleſh ſhould rejoice in itſelf.* And yet one Thing more is added by the Apoſtle; for if a Man could rid himſelf out of Miſery, if a Man could help himſelf when he is under any Croſs or Trouble, he would then be ready to boaſt in himſelf: Therefore, ſaith he; *Chriſt is made to us Redemption alſo:* So that take

any

any Evil, though it be but a ſmall Evil, a ſmall Diſeaſe, a little Trouble, no Man is able to help himſelf, it is *Chriſt* that redeems us from the leaſt Evils, as well as from Hell itſelf. (For you muſt know, that all the Miſeries that befall us in the World, are but ſo many Deſcents and Steps towards Hell;) Now all the Redemption that we have, is from *Chriſt:* So that let us look into our Lives, and ſee what Evils we have eſcaped, and ſee what Troubles we have gone through, ſee what Afflictions we have been delivered from, it is all through *Chriſt*, who *is made Redemption for us.*

IT is true indeed, there are ſome general Works of GOD's Providence, that all Men taſte of; but there is no Evil that the Saints are freed from, but it is purchaſed by the Blood of *Chriſt*; and all this GOD hath done, *that no Fleſh might rejoice in itſelf:* And for this Cauſe, Salvation is propounded to be received only by Faith. There is no more required at our Hands, but the Taking of *Chriſt* by Faith; and when we have taken Him, then He is all this to us.

YOU now ſee the Reaſons why it is by Faith only, that the Righteouſneſs of *Chriſt* is made ours to Salvation. I need add but one Thing more; and that is, to ſhew you what this Faith is: For, when we ſpeak ſo much of Faith, every Man will be inquiſitive to know what this Faith is.

FAITH, if we take it in the General, is nothing elſe but this: *A firm Aſſent given to the Things contained in the Holy Scriptures, for the Authority of* GOD *that ſpake them.*

BUT if we ſpeak of *Juſtifying* Faith, we ſhall find, that that is not commonly expreſſed in the

Word *Believing* only; but *believing in Chriſt*, which is another Thing: And therefore you ſhall find that it differeth in two Things, from this general Faith: Firſt, in Regard of the Object; and indeed that is the main Difference: For whereas the other Faith looks upon the whole Book of GOD, and believes all that GOD hath revealed, becauſe GOD hath revealed it; this *juſtifying* Faith pitcheth upon *Chriſt*, and takes Him with all his Benefits and Privileges: So that the Difference lieth not in the Habit of Faith, but in the Object; for with the ſame Faith that we believe other Things, we believe this; as with the ſame Hand that a Man takes other Writings, he takes a Pardon; with the ſame Eyes that the *Iſraelites* ſaw other Things, they looked upon the brazen Serpent. The ſecond Difference is a main one too; for whereas the other Faith doth no more but believe the Truth that is revealed, juſtifying Faith takes *Chriſt*, and receives Him. There is then an Act of the Will added to that Faith, as it is expreſſed, *Heb.* xi. 13. *They ſaw the Promiſes afar off, and embraced them.* Others (it may be) ſee the Promiſes, and believe them, but they do not embrace them. So that juſtifying Faith may be thus deſcribed:

JUSTIFYING Faith *is a Grace or Habit infuſed into the Soul by the Holy Ghoſt, whereby we are enabled to believe, not only that the Meſſias is offered to us, but alſo to receive Him as a* LORD *and Saviour:* That is, both to be ſaved by Him, and to obey Him: (mark it) I put them together, to take Him as a LORD, and as a Saviour: For you ſhall find that they are join'd together in the ordinary Phraſe of Scripture; *Jeſus Chriſt our* LORD *and Saviour.* Therefore we muſt take Heed of disjoining thoſe that GOD hath joined together; we muſt take *Chriſt*, as well for a LORD, as a Saviour. Let a Man

Man do this, and he may be assured, that his Faith is a justifying Faith. Therefore, mark it diligently, if thou wilt take *Christ* as a Saviour only, that will not serve thy Turn. *Christ* giveth not Himself to any upon that Condition, only to save him from Hell; but we must take Him as a LORD too, to be subject to Him, to obey Him, and to square our Actions according to his Will in every Thing. You must not only take Him as a Priest, to interceed for you, but to be your King also: You must suffer Him to rule you in all Things, you must be content to obey all his Commandments. It is not enough to take *Christ* as a Head, only to receive Influence and Comfort from Him; but you must take Him also as a Head to be ruled by Him, as the Members are ruled by the Head. You must not take one Benefit alone with the Members, to receive Influence from the Head, but you must be content also to be guided by Him in all Things, else you take Him in vain.

THAT you may more fully understand what this Faith is, I will add these four Things: 1. I will shew you the Object of this Faith. 2. The Subject or Place where it is. 3. The Manner how it justifieth us. 4. The Actions of it.

FIRST, Consider the Object of this Faith; and that is *Christ*. And herein this is to be marked; a Man must first take *Christ* Himself, and after, the Privileges that come by Him. And this Point I could wish were more prest by our Divines, and that our Hearers would more mind it. I say, Remember that you must first take *Christ* Himself, and then other Things that we have by Him, as the Apostle saith, *Rom.* viii. 32. *If* GOD *hath given us Him*, that is *Christ*, *He will with Him give us all Things else:* But first have *Christ* Himself, and then

all Things with Him. Faith doth not leap over *Chriſt*, and pitch upon the Promiſes of Juſtification and Adoption, but it firſt takes *Chriſt*. The clear Underſtanding of this will help us much in apprehending what juſtifying Faith is. As it is in other Things, if you would have Light, you muſt firſt have the Sun; if you would have Strength, you muſt firſt take Meat and Drink, before you can have that Benefit by it: So you muſt firſt have *Chriſt* Himſelf, before you can partake of thoſe Benefits by him: And that I take to be the Meaning of this, *Mark* xvi. 15. *Go preach the Goſpel to every Creature under Heaven; he that believes and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved:* that is, He that will believe that *Jeſus Chriſt* is come in the Fleſh, and that He is offered to Mankind for a Saviour, and will be baptized, that will give up himſelf to Him, that will take his Mark upon him; (For in that Place, by Baptizing, is meant nothing elſe but the giving up of a Man's ſelf to *Chriſt*, and making a publick Teſtimony of it.) Now every one that will believe, and be baptized; that is, give up himſelf to *Chriſt*, ſhall be ſaved: So that a Man muſt firſt take *Chriſt* Himſelf, and then he may do as the Wife, after ſhe hath her Huſband; ſhe may think of all the Benefits ſhe hath by him, and may take them, and uſe them as her own.

THE ſecond Thing that I promis'd, was to ſhew you the Subject of Faith, and that is the whole Heart of Man; both the Mind and the Will. Firſt, on the Part of the *Underſtanding*, it is required that it believe; that is, conceive and apprehend what GOD hath revealed in the Scriptures. And here an Act of GOD muſt come in, putting a Light into the Underſtanding. For, my Beloved, Faith is but an Addition of a new Light to Reaſon; that whereas Reaſon is purblind, Faith comes, and gives

gives a new Light, and makes us ſee the Things revealed by GOD, which Reaſon cannot do. By Faith we apprehend theſe great and glorious Myſteries, which otherwiſe we could not apprehend. So then there muſt be Light put into the Mind, that a Man may be able by that to believe this; to conceive and apprehend the Things that are offered in the Goſpel.

BUT this is not all, there is an Act alſo of the *Will* requir'd, which is to take and receive *Chriſt:* For this Taking is an Act of the Will; therefore obſerve there muſt be a *Conſent* as well as an *Aſſent.* Now it is the Act of the Underſtanding to aſſent to the Truth, which is contained in the Promiſes; but that is not all, there is alſo an Act of the Will requiſite to conſent unto them; that is, to embrace them, to take them, and to lay Hold upon them, and to apply them to a Man's Self. Now this alſo muſt be wrought by GOD. As GOD puts a new Light into the Underſtanding, to ſee and believe theſe Truths; ſo there is another Act which GOD alſo works on the Will; and unleſs He work it, it is not done. For come to any Man, that is in the State of Nature, and aſk him: "Will you be content to take *Chriſt?* That is to ſay, to receive him in that Manner as He hath been deſcribed?" His Anſwer would be, "No." Beloved, the Lives of Men expreſs it, tho' they ſpeak it not in ſo many Words: Therefore, 'till GOD come, and draw a Man, and change his Will, the Work is not done. So then we ſee, that *Faith is an Action both of the Mind and the Will, wrought by* GOD, *enlightening the Mind, and changing the Will*; which is that which our Saviour *Chriſt* calls Drawing; *None comes to Me, unleſs the Father draw him*: That is, unleſs GOD change him, and put ſuch a Diſpoſition

ſition into him, that he can find no Reſt 'till he come to *Chriſt*.

THIRDLY, The next Thing we are to ſhew you, is, *How this Faith juſtifieth.*

Now you muſt know, that this Faith is conſider'd two Ways; either as it works, or as it receives; either as a Quality, or as an Inſtrument. As a Quality it works; and in this Senſe it hath nothing to do with Juſtification. It juſtifieth us as it is an Inſtrument, and that not by altering the Nature of Sin; that is, by making Sin to be no Sin, but by taking away the Efficacy of Sin. As for Example; when a Man hath committed Sins, Faith doth not make his Sins to be no Sins. It cannot be, that that Sin which is once committed, ſhould be made no Sin. We cannot make Adultery to be no Adultery, for the Nature of the Thing muſt remain. Well, now what doth Faith? It doth this; tho' the Sin be the ſame that it was, yet it takes away the Guilt of Sin, that Power of it by which it puts us into the State of Condemnation, and by which it binds us over to Puniſhment. As the Lions, to which *Daniel* was caſt, were the ſame as they were before, they had the ordinary Nature of Lions; but at that Time, GOD took away that Fierceneſs that was in them, ſo that they did not devour him; ſo it is with Sin; The Nature of Sin is to condemn us; but when GOD ſhall take away this Efficacy from it, it doth not condemn: And this is That that Faith doth.

FAITH then, by taking away the Efficacy and Power of Sin, juſtifies as an Inſtrument, as a Hand takes the Pardon. The King, when he pardoneth a Traitor, doth not make his Treaſon to be no Treaſon, for the Act of the Treaſon remains ſtill;

ſtill; but the Taking of the Pardon makes the Traitor not to be under Condemnation. So, my Beloved, Faith is that Act that takes the Pardon from GOD, ſo, that tho' the Sin remain the ſame, and of its own Nature, is of Power to bind us over to Death; yet, by this Faith taking the Pardon from GOD, it comes to paſs, that it hurts us not, we are not condemn'd for it. Thus, I ſay, Faith juſtifies us as an Inſtrument, by accepting, receiving, and taking the Acquittance, that GOD hath given to us, thro' *Chriſt*.

FOURTHLY, Let me add the next Thing; which is, What the Acts of this Faith are: And they are theſe Three: Firſt, To reconcile, or to juſtify. Secondly, To pacify the Heart. Thirdly, To purify, or ſanctify.

THE firſt Thing that Faith doth, is to reconcile: That is, (as I ſaid before) by Faith we are pitch'd upon *Chriſt*; we take Him firſt, and then we take the Privileges, that follow upon it, Forgiveneſs and Adoption: Being reconcil'd to *Chriſt* by Faith, we have Boldneſs to go to *Chriſt* for Forgiveneſs, to go to *Chriſt*, to make us Heirs of all Things. For after this Manner, Faith doth it; *All Things are yours, whether* Paul *or* Apollos. And why? Becauſe you are *Chriſt's*. (Mark it,) you muſt firſt be *Chriſt's*: That is, even as the Wife is the Husbands, ſo you muſt be knit and united to *Chriſt*, and then all Things are yours. Faith firſt makes us one with Him; and in Him, one with GOD the Father; and then all Things are given unto us, and made ours.

THE ſecond Act of Faith is to quiet and pacify the Heart; to comfort us, in aſſuring us that our Sins and Tranſgreſſions are forgiven; and this is diffe-

different from the former. For you muſt note, there are two Acts of Faith; the one *Direct*, by which we apprehend and take *Chriſt*, and the Righteouſneſs that is offer'd thro' Him, by which we take Forgiveneſs: And the other *Reflex*, by which we know that we have taken *Chriſt*, and have taken out our Pardon: And this Act is very different from the former. The firſt Act of Faith, whereby we take *Chriſt*, and thoſe Privileges by Him, is founded upon the ſure Word of GOD; GOD hath tender'd it to us, upon his Word and Promiſe: But the Second, whereby I know that I have done this, is grounded upon Experience. But we are helped by the *Holy Ghoſt* to know it, *for the Spirit itſelf witneſſes with our Spirit, that we are the Children of* GOD.

WE come now to the Uſes of this Point; *Faith is that whereby we are made Partakers of the Righteouſneſs of* Chriſt.

AND Firſt, if it be by Faith only, that we are made Partakers of that Righteouſneſs, that ſaveth us, We ſhould learn to come to *Chriſt* with an empty Hand, and not to be diſcouraged for any Want that we find in ourſelves, nor for the Greatneſs of our Sin: We ſhould not be diſcourag'd for the Want of a perfect Degree of Repentance and godly Sorrow, or for the Want of whatſoever good Work you think is requiſite to Salvation. For, my Beloved, you muſt know, That this is the Nature of Faith, that it doth its Work beſt alone. Faith is ſo far from requiring any Thing in the Party that ſhall have *Chriſt*, that a Man muſt neceſſarily let go all Things elſe, before he can believe. This is a Point neceſſary to be conſider'd; becauſe every Man is apt to think, that it is impoſſible that GOD ſhould accept him, unleſs there be

be Something in him, for which GOD ſhould regard him. If he find himſelf to be exceeding ungodly, he thinks that *Chriſt* will never look after him.

AGAIN, If he hath nothing at all to give to GOD; if he hath Nothing to bring with him in his Hand, he thinks he ſhall have no Pardon. But you ſee, that Faith requires Nothing, in the firſt Apprehenſion of *Chriſt*; if a Man be never ſo ungodly, it is all one; the Offer notwithſtanding is made to him.

AGAIN, Why ſhould you look for Righteouſneſs in yourſelves? The Work of Faith is to take that Righteouſneſs, that is none of your own: There is Nothing at all elſe required. I ſay, All that Faith hath to do, is only to take from *Chriſt* that Righteouſneſs, that we want ourſelves. So then there is no Reaſon, why any Man ſhould be diſcouraged in his firſt Coming, for any Want that he finds in himſelf, or for any Condition that he is in. It is Faith only that makes us Partakers of a Righteouſneſs to juſtify us, becauſe we ourſelves have it not. I ſay, Faith is ſo far from requiring any Thing to be added to it, to help it in the Act of Juſtifying, that of Neceſſity it excludes all Things elſe: For Faith hath this double Quality; to lay Hold of *Chriſt* offered, and to empty a Man of all Things elſe. As for Example,

FAITH is not only the Believing of a Truth which is delivered, from the Authority of him that delivers it; but it is a Reſting upon *Chriſt*, a Caſting ourſelves upon Him. Now when a Man leans upon any other Thing, he ſtands not upon his own Bottom; for if he did, he could not properly be ſaid to lean. If a Man truſt, and depend upon ano-

another, he provides not for himſelf; but he that provides ſo, as to make himſelf ſafe, if another ſhould fail him, ſo far truſts himſelf. So that, if you truſt *Chriſt*, it is of Neceſſity required, that you be unbottom'd of yourſelves; you muſt altogether lean upon him; you muſt caſt yourſelves wholly upon him.

FAITH hath ſuch an attracting Virtue in it, that it fills the Heart with *Chriſt*. Now it cannot fill the Heart with *Chriſt*, unleſs the Heart be emptied firſt. Therefore I ſay, Faith hath a double Quality; the one to take; the other to empty; and the one cannot be without the other. Hence it is that we ſay, Faith ingrafts a Man. A Man cannot be ingrafted into a new Stock, unleſs he be quite cut off from the former Root; therefore Faith drives a Man out of himſelf, and makes him nothing in himſelf; ſo that when he comes to lay Hold on the Promiſe of GOD, he looks at no Quality or Excellency of his own; he looks at no Fitneſs, or Worthineſs in himſelf, but he comes with a Hand and Heart altogether empty: So that when a Man comes to beſeech GOD to receive him to Mercy, and to grant him a Pardon of his Sins; when he comes to take Hold of the Righteouſneſs of *Chriſt*, for his Juſtification; if he think that there is any little Worthineſs in him, or that there is no Fault in him at all, and from thence ſhall think that GOD will receive him; this Man is not fit to take *Chriſt*; he muſt be wholly emptied of himſelf, and then GOD will ſpeak Peace unto him.

BUT you will aſk, What is that which Faith doth empty a Man of? I anſwer, Faith empties a Man of two Things: 1. Of all Opinion of Righteouſneſs in himſelf. 2. Of all Opinion of Strength and

and Ability to help himſelf: For if either of theſe remain in the Heart, a Man cannot receive *Chriſt*.

FIRST, I ſay, a Man muſt be emptied of all Opinion of Worthineſs in himſelf; of all Conceit that he hath the leaſt Righteouſneſs in himſelf. When the young Man came to *Chriſt*, and *Chriſt* told him that he muſt keep the Law, and he ſaid he had done all thoſe Things from his Youth, *Chriſt* knew that he was not yet fit: therefore, ſaith He, *Go and ſell all that thou haſt*. *Chriſt*'s End was nothing elſe but to diſcover to him his own Unworthineſs. If thou wilt be perfect, (ſaith *Chriſt*) make this Trial: Canſt thou be content to let thy Wealth go, to follow me? Canſt thou be content to ſuffer Perſecution? He could not: And this ſhewed that he was not yet perfect; but that he was ſtill a ſinful Man. This was the Way to prepare him for *Chriſt*. This Courſe we ſee *Chriſt* always took. We ſee it expreſſed in the Parable of the *Publican* and *Phariſee*; the *Publican* went away juſtified, becauſe he was wholly emptied of all Opinion of Worth in himſelf: But the *Phariſee* was not juſtified; not becauſe he was not outwardly a juſter Man than the *Publican*; but becauſe he had an Opinion of his own Righteouſneſs; of a Worthineſs in himſelf, therefore he went Home not juſtified. That which a Man thinks he hath already of his own, he will never be at the Coſt to buy. Therefore that is the firſt Thing that a Man muſt do; he muſt think himſelf of no Worth at all; he muſt be empty of all Opinion of his own Excellency.

SECONDLY, but this is not all; although a Man be perſwaded of this, that he hath no Worthineſs in himſelf, yet if he think he is able to help himſelf, he will not come to take *Chriſt*: And therefore this farther is required; That a Man ſee that he hath no

Ability to help himſelf, that all his Redemption muſt come from *Chriſt*. If you aſk many Men, whether they have any Opinion of Worth in themſelves? they will be ready to anſwer, No. What then is the Reaſon that they come not to *Chriſt*? It is becauſe they are in Health and Proſperity, and imagine they can do it ſoon enough hereafter: They can for the preſent ſubſiſt without *Chriſt*: But when GOD ſhall ſhew a Man's Heart to himſelf; when GOD ſhews a Man his Danger, and how unable he is to help himſelf out of it; then he will have no Reſt 'till he have *Chriſt*. Many Men complain, that they would believe, but they want that Sorrow that they ſhould have; that Repentance they would have; they think they are not yet fit, therefore they dare not apply the Promiſes. We may complain indeed if we find a Want of Deſire after *Chriſt*; for that is required: But if we look upon any Thing as a *Qualification* in ourſelves, ſuch a Worthineſs is not required: We muſt be driven out of all Conceit of it, or elſe we cannot take *Chriſt*. Well then, ſeeing it is only Faith, whereby we lay Hold of *Chriſt*'s Righteouſneſs, we have no reaſon to be diſcouraged, in Reſpect of any Want; nay, we muſt find a Want of all Things in ourſelves, before we can be made Partakers of this Righteouſneſs.

A SECOND Uſe of this Point is, if it be by Faith only we are made Partakers of this Righteouſneſs, Then we ſhould learn to glory only in GOD, not in ourſelves; for this is the very End why GOD appointed this Way of Salvation: *For He hath choſen us to the Praiſe of the Glory of his Grace, in his Beloved:* Eph. i. 6. Now if that be GOD's End, why He will have us ſaved by Faith, let us not diſappoint Him of his Aim; let us not take from Him the Glory of his Grace; but let us glory in the LORD.

This

This Point we ſhould eſpecially look to, not to glory in ourſelves, but in GOD: For, we are naturally apt to glory in ourſelves. Every Man is apt to reflect upon himſelf, and would fain ſee ſome Worth there, that he might glory in. It was *Adam*'s Fault in *Paradiſe*; whereas he ſhould have truſted GOD, and have wholly depended upon Him for all. He would needs know Good and Evil: He would have Something of his own; and this was it that loſt him all, and brought the Curſe upon him. Now in the Goſpel, GOD comes by a ſecond Means of ſaving Men; and in this the LORD would have the Creature to have Nothing in himſelf to glory in. But Man is hardly brought to this, but exalts and lifts up himſelf, and would fain have ſome Worth and Excellency of his own; but as long as we do thus, we cannot be ſaved. We have an excellent Place to this Purpoſe *Col.* iii, 11. the Apoſtle ſaith there, (in the Matter of Salvation) *There is neither* Jew *nor* Gentile, *Bond nor Free, but* Chriſt *is all in all*, That is, when we come to be juſtified before GOD, when we come to the Matter of Salvation, GOD looks at Nothing in a Man, He looks at no Difference between Man and Man: One Man is virtuous, another Man is wicked; one Man is a *Jew*, and hath all the Privileges of that People; another Man is a *Gentile*, an Alien from the Common-Wealth of *Iſrael*; one Man is circumciſed, another Man is uncircumciſed; but all this is Nothing. Why? Becauſe *Chriſt is all in all.* You are to obſerve firſt, that *Chriſt* is all; that is, there is nothing elſe required to juſtify. Indeed, if we were Something, and He were not all, we might then look at Something beſides; but he is all. And again, He is *all in all:* That is, go thro' all Things, that you may think will help you to Salvation, in all thoſe Things *Chriſt* is only to be

reſpected, and Nothing but *Chriſt*. Whatſoever is done without *Chriſt*, GOD regards it not. If you will do any Work of your own to help yourſelves in Salvation, if you will reſt upon any Privileges, *Chriſt* is not all in all; but *Chriſt* muſt be all in all in every Thing: And if only *Chriſt* be all, then we muſt come only with Faith; for it is Faith only that lays hold upon *Chriſt*.

Now a natural Man will not have *Chriſt* to be all, but himſelf will be ſomething: Or if *Chriſt* be all in ſome Things, he will not have *Chriſt* to be all in every Thing. To have *Chriſt* to be his Wiſdom, his Righteouſneſs, his Sanctification; to do Nothing but by *Chriſt*; to have *Chriſt* to be his Redemption, not to be able to help himſelf without *Chriſt*, but that *Chriſt* muſt help him out of every Trouble, and beſtow upon him every Comfort; this, I ſay, is contrary to the Nature of Man. Therefore we muſt be throughly emptied of ourſelves in this Matter of Glorying, as well as in the Matter of Taking: For in what Meaſure any Man ſets any Price upon himſelf, ſo far as he hath any Opinion of himſelf that he is ſomething, juſt ſo far he detracts from *Chriſt:* But when a Man boaſts not of himſelf at all, ſuch a Man rejoiceth in GOD altogether, ſuch a Man will ſtand amazed at the Heighth, and Breadth, and Length, and Depth of the Love of GOD; ſuch a Man will be able to ſee, that there are unſearchable Riches in *Chriſt*; ſuch a Man will be able to ſay with *Paul*, That he cares for Nothing, he reckons *all Things Dung*, *Phil.* iii. 8. I am a *Jew*, I am a *Phariſee*, I have been as ſtrict as any Man; yea, I went beyond others; yet I look not after theſe Things, but that I may be found in Him, not having mine own Righteouſneſs, but that Righteouſneſs that GOD accepteth, which is *through Faith in Him.*

There-

Therefore, my Brethren, learn thus to rejoice in *Chriſt* and in GOD, and not in yourſelves. This is the moſt excellent Work that we can perform.

THIRDLY, if it be Faith only, by which we are made Partakers of the Righteouſneſs by which we are ſaved, then it ſhould teach us to let other Things go, and principally to mind this; to labour to get Faith, whatſoever become of other Things; for it is that by which we have Salvation. 'Tis true, there are many other Excellencies that we are capable of, many moral Virtues, ſuch as *Ariſtotle* and *Socrates* have deſcribed; but without Faith, GOD regards none of theſe. Take one that is a wicked Man, and take another that lives the moſt ſtrict and exact Life, who yet is not juſtified by Faith, GOD makes no Difference between theſe Men; the one is as near to Heaven as the other; GOD looks upon them both with the ſame Eye; for He regardeth nothing without Faith. He that is the moſt Prophane and Ungodly, if he come with Faith, he ſhall obtain *Chriſt*; the other that hath all moral Virtues, without Faith, they ſhall do him no Good. Therefore you are to ſeek for Nothing in the Matter of Juſtification, but how you may be enabled to believe. If Men will employ their Strength and their Endeavours, and buſy themſelves to attain ſuch and ſuch Virtues, it is but as the Watering of the Branches, and to let the Root alone. Faith is the Root; that is, it is that that makes all acceptable to GOD. Without this, what is our Preaching? We may gather near as good Inſtructions to reſiſt Vice, out of *Seneca*, as out of *Paul*'s Epiſtles; but this differenceth it, that we preach *Chriſt*, and from *Chriſt* we derive Strength to do all Things elſe; and that makes all elſe to be acceptable; ſo that is it, that you muſt

look after, to have *Chriſt*, to receive all from Him, to do all for Him.

You here ſee not only the Difference between moral Virtues, and thoſe in a true Chriſtian, (which is Godlineſs) that they come from different Fountains, and look to different Ends; but you ſee alſo the Difference between the Shews of Strictneſs in worldly Men, and that Sincerity of Life, that we preach unto you, which is an Effect of Faith: For, if you mark it, you ſhall find that all they do, either is without *Chriſt*, or adds to *Chriſt*: They think they ſhall be ſaved for doing ſuch and ſuch Things, which prepare and fit them for Salvation: They look mainly to the Works done, but ſtill *Chriſt* only is not ſought after in all this. But now look to the Doctrine that we have delivered: It is *Chriſt* that we preach: It is Faith that we preach unto you. It is true, we preach thoſe Things too; we lay the ſame Neceſſity upon you of doing good Works; we ſtir you up to Holineſs of Life, and Mortification: But here is the Difference; we ſay that Faith doth all: We derive all from a juſtifying Faith, laying hold upon *Chriſt*: And ſo, Love to Him, and all other Graces ariſe from this.

Now when we are come with Boldneſs, and have laid hold upon *Chriſt*, then let us look to the Privileges, then let us take the Pardon of our Sins, and all Things elſe, only remembring that Condition of After-Obedience. 'Tis true we may come freely, and though nothing be required, but that we take the Son of GOD that is offered, yet, there is a Condition of After-Obedience; we muſt reſolve to ſerve Him, and to love Him with all our Heart; we muſt reſolve to do that which *Ruth* promiſeth to *Naomi*, to live with him, and to be with him, and that

that his People ſhall be our People, and his GOD, our GOD.

PERHAPS you will now ſay, "I am willing to do this, to part from my Luſts, and cleave to *Chriſt* alone, but I am not able." To this I anſwer, If thou art but willing, *Chriſt* deſires no more. Take a Man that is ſtrongly given to Company, that is given to Fornication, to Swearing, or whatſoever the Sin be, I would aſk him this Queſtion; Put the Caſe thou wert able to get the Victory over thy Luſt, wouldſt thou be content to part with it, and to take *Chriſt?* If he ſay, "No, I had rather enjoy the Sweetneſs of my Luſt ſtill:" Whoever thou art that thus anſwereſt, I aſk thee, Art thou not now worthy to be condemned? But if thou anſwer, "I would, upon Condition I were able to overcome my Luſts;" I aſſure thee, GOD will make thee able. GOD requires no more than a Willingneſs to come, and take *Chriſt:* The other is GOD's Work.

"BUT (thou mayſt ſay) I have tryed, and have not found it ſo." I anſwer; It cannot be: Thou haſt not yet reſolved to part with thy Luſts: Thou haſt not yet ſet down this peremptory Concluſion, That thou wilt forſake every thing, that thou mayſt have *Chriſt*. If any Man ſay, he is willing to take *Chriſt*, and to part with All, if he could get the Victory: Let me tell thee, thou muſt firſt reſolve to take *Chriſt* upon his own Conditions; and if thou do that, GOD hath promiſed to do the other Himſelf. When GOD calleth you to come unto *Chriſt*, He promiſeth that the Virtue of *Chriſt*'s Death ſhall kill Sin in you, and that the Virtue of *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection ſhall raiſe you up to Newneſs of Life. GOD hath promiſed that He will give you the Holy Ghoſt: Now, *He that hath called you is faithful,*

and

and He will do it So that I ſay, if thou wilt come in, if thou wilt accept of *Chriſt* upon his own Conditions, it is certain GOD will receive thee. And if thou find thyſelf troubled with any Luſt or Temptation, preſs upon GOD, urge Him with his Word and Promiſe, that He would aſſiſt thee by his own Strength, and reſolve as *Job*, *Though He kill me, yet will I truſt in Him.* And He will enable thee to overcome.

Now becauſe this Laying Hold upon the Promiſes is a Point of much Moment, and becauſe it is a Thing that is not eaſily done, therefore I will ſhew you theſe two Things: 1. That the Underſtanding muſt be rightly informed in it: And 2. That the Will muſt be drawn to it.

FIRST, the Underſtanding muſt be rightly informed, what Ground a Man hath to do it. When a Man is perſwaded in a confuſed Manner, without any juſt Ground, this is not right; this keepeth many from Aſſurance, becauſe they are not clearly inſtructed in it: For, to the End that Faith may take Hold of the Promiſe, we muſt conceive of the right Method; and that ſtands in theſe four Things:

1. WE muſt ſee our own Condition, we muſt be ſick before we can ſeek to the Phyſician; we muſt ſee ourſelves to be condemned Men, and that there is nothing in us to help ourſelves; we muſt ſee ourſelves to be Children of Wrath, and then we ſhall come and ſeek for a Remedy.

2. WE muſt look to the Promiſes of GOD, which are contained in his Book. *Chriſt* is there clearly offered, only with this Condition, that I muſt obey Him, and ſerve Him, and love Him. *Chriſt* is offered

offered in the Scriptures to every one, and if you have Him, you ſhall have a Pardon of your Sins with Him; only He is offered with Condition of Obedience. Well then, after a Man hath conſulted the Book of GOD, he conſiders in the firſt Place, the Generality of the Promiſe, that it is offered to all, and none is excepted; and in the next Place, he concludes, if it is offered to all, it is offer'd to *me*. But he enquires further; Will *Chriſt* do to me as he hath promiſed? Is He able and willing to do it? When this is well ponder'd, and we find that we have a ſure Word to confirm this,

3. THEN in the third Place, we muſt come and take Him. And when this is done, when we have taken *Chriſt*, and beſtowed ourſelves upon Him, then,

4. IN the next Place, we muſt conſider what we ſhall have by Him, and make uſe of all that *Chriſt* brings with Him. Pardon of Sin, and all Things elſe that He hath, I have with Him. I am the Son of GOD, and I ſhall be ſanctified, (for together with Him I have his Spirit;) all my Prayers ſhall be heard; all the Promiſes in the Book of GOD are mine. As all the World is his, ſo it is all the Wealth of a Chriſtian after he hath taken *Chriſt*.

SECONDLY, The next Thing to be done, is this, To draw the Will to take the Promiſes; for, tho' the Underſtanding rightly apprehends all that is delivered in the Word, yet except we willingly take *Chriſt* upon theſe Conditions, the Thing is not done.

Seeing then the Will hath a Part in Faith, as well as the Underſtanding, and this muſt be drawn, the Queſtion,

Queſtion is, Who muſt draw it? This is the Work of GOD; He only hath the Sovereignty over the Will and Affections of Man; it is the great Prerogative of GOD: When a Buſineſs is to be done with the Will and Affections, GOD muſt perſuade it. So ſaith our LORD, *John* vi. 44. *No Man can come to me except the Father draw him.* But how ſhall that be done? It is not ſuch a Drawing as when a Man is drawn by Force; but it is a Drawing which is done by changing the Will and Affections: When GOD alters the Bent of the Mind, and affects a Man's Heart ſo, that he cannot reſt 'till he hath *Chriſt*; and when he ſees his Need of Him, he will not give over, 'till he is ſure that he is reconciled to Him. *Draw me, and I will run after Thee*, ſaith the deſiring Soul: Here is meant ſuch a Drawing as is called the Teaching of GOD, *John* vi. 45. *Ye ſhall be taught of* GOD: That is, when GOD comes to teach a Thing, He boweth the Will and Affections to do it.

Now there are three Means by which GOD doth uſually draw the Will. And 1. The Will is drawn, by being perſuaded what the miſerable Condition of a Man is, that is not yet come to *Chriſt*, that hath not yet taken Him, that hath not got the Pardon of his Sins, that hath not got Aſſurance that *Chriſt* hath received him to Mercy. 2. By being perſuaded of the Good that he ſhall get by coming to *Chriſt*. And 3. That he ſhall not looſe his Labour, if he attempt to come to Him.

THE firſt Thing, I ſay, that draws us to *Chriſt*, is to conſider how miſerable we are without Him. When a Man is perſuaded of that, and ſees this Neceſſity laid upon him, of coming or periſhing, then he will come in. Therefore we ſay the Law

drives

drives Men to *Chriſt:* And the Law doth it by ſhewing a Man his Sin, and the Curſe due to it. This draws him to conſider, that GOD is his Enemy, that all the Creatures are his Enemies: For if GOD be thine Enemy, then needs muſt all the Creatures be ſo, becauſe they turn with Him to and fro, as an Army turns at the Beck of the General. Now for a Man to conſider that he hath GOD and the Creatures to be his Enemies, that every Thing works together for his Hurt; that *Proſperity ſlays him*, and Adverſity is not a Medicine, but a Poiſon to him: That the Word, which is the *Savour of Life* to others, is the *Savour of Death* to him; that the Sacraments, which are a Means to convey Grace and Aſſurance to others, are a Means to convey *Satan* to his Heart; I ſay, when a Man ſeriouſly conſiders this, when he ſeeth what Caſe he is in, and that he cannot live without *Chriſt*, this will be one Thing that will incline the Will to take *Chriſt*.

IN the ſecond Place, we muſt find ſome Good, ſome Excellency in *Chriſt*; and this is the ſecond Thing that draws the Will. If we take Him, we ſhall have all his Wealth, and all his Honour, all the Joy aud Pleaſure he can afford. We ſhall have all his Wealth; that is, go thro' the whole Univerſe, and ſee what there is profitable or comfortable to the Sons of Men, and all that is ours. Is not this a ſtrong Argument to move a Man to take *Chriſt?* That all the Angels in Heaven, all the excellent Miniſters on the Earth (that are next to Angels) are all his Servants? All the World is his, both Life and Death; that is, whatſoever belongs to this Life or another, all is for his Service. When the Apoſtle could ſay no more, he ſaid, *Things preſent, or Things to come*; for a Man ſhould look to both. As Heaven will not content him without the

the Things of this Life, ſo the Things of this Life will not content him without Heaven; but when there is both, the Mind is ſatisfied. This then may well draw you, when you ſee how miſerable you are without Him, and that you ſhall gain ſo much by Him.

IN the third Place, If you ſeek for *Chriſt*, you ſhall find Him; you ſhall not loſe your Labour in attempting; you ſhall be ſure to obtain. It is a great Means to encourage you to come unto Him, when you ſee you ſhall not fail. There is Nothing required on your Part, as you have heard before, but only an earneſt Hunger and Thirſt after Him. *He juſtifies the Ungodly.* And therefore if any Thing hinder, it muſt be on GOD's Part. Now what is there on GOD's Part that hinders? He hath promiſed, and He will not go from his Word: And therefore, when there is no Hindrance on either Part, why do you not believe? If you are willing to come, you are ſure to receive Him; you ſhall have Remiſſion of all your Sins.

CONSIDER what *Chriſt* did in the Days of his Fleſh; how he behaved himſelf then? Was He not exceeding gentle to all that came unto Him? Exceeding compaſſionate and pitiful? Ready to heal every one, ready to do any Thing that was requeſted of Him? That He denied not any that was importunate with Him? Do you think that He hath put off that Diſpoſition? Is He not the ſame ſtill? As it is in the *Hebrews*, Is He not a merciful High Prieſt ſtill? The Bowels of Compaſſion in Him melt over a ſtraying Sinner, and He is ready to receive him. His Bowels yearn within Him, and therefore doubt not but the LORD will receive you.

WHEN

WHEN all this is put together; when I ſee the Miſery of a Man without *Chriſt*; when I ſee I ſhall be happy with Him; when I ſee it is of Neceſſity; and, if I come, I ſhall certainly be received, He cannot refuſe me; all this will help to perſuade me. This you ſhould learn to preſs upon your own Hearts. We that are the Miniſters of *Chriſt*, are bound to preſs it upon you. He hath ſent us out to compel Men to come in, that his Houſe may be full. He commands us to go out into the Highways, and into the Hedges, and *compel Men to come in:* That is, to be very importunate with them, promiſe them, threaten them, command them in the Name of *Chriſt* to come in. GOD would fain have his Houſe filled. *He hath killed his Fatlings:* He would not have his Table ready, and have no Gueſts: He would have his Houſe filled, that his Table might not be prepared in vain; and that it may not be in vain, we are to invite you to this Marriage; we are to invite you to a Banquet. In a Banquet there is a Concourſe of all pleaſant Things. Such Things are in *Chriſt*. There is a Concourſe of all ſpiritual Joy and Comfort; of all precious Things you can find: And if you will come and take, ye ſhall have all his Jewels, all his Graces, to adorn you. Let this perſuade you to come in.

BUT ſome may object, "If I come in, I muſt loſe my Right Eye, or Right Hand; I muſt part with my Sins, which are as dear to me as theſe Members." It is true, we muſt do ſo, but then we ſhall have Heaven for our Labour. If Heaven be not worth the Loſing of a Right Eye, or a Right Hand, keep thine Eye ſtill; but if thou doſt, thou ſhalt be ſure to go to Hell with it. There needs no other Anſwer; do but ſeriouſly conſider this;

if I will, I may keep this fleſhly Deſire; but it will certainly lead me to Hell.

BUT, it may be further objected; "If I do thus, I muſt deny myſelf; and it is a difficult Thing for a Man to offer Violence to himſelf, to croſs himſelf in all his Deſires; eſpecially to croſs thoſe that are moſt rooted in the Soul, is very difficult. I anſwer, *Chriſt* is worthy of all theſe: And thou ſhalt provide better for thyſelf by doing this. If a Man have a Diſeaſe, that cries hard to him to have ſuch and ſuch Things, it is Wiſdom for him to deny it, becauſe he nouriſheth that which would deſtroy him. A Man's Self is his Diſeaſe, and to indulge that, is his Deſtruction. That which you call yourſelf, is *your* Diſeaſe, and when you feed yourſelf, you feed your Diſeaſe; and therefore every one is to be ruled by the Phyſician's Advice, who teacheth to do otherwiſe, even to deny *Self* daily.

YE have now heard the firſt Point; that Righteouſneſs is revealed and offered in the Goſpel, to as many as will take it: As alſo the Second; that it is by Faith we are made to partake of this Righteouſneſs. The third Point that we are now to handle is this, that, *Faith admits Degrees, and every Chriſtian ought to grow from Degree to Degree.*

THIS Propoſition hath two Parts: 1. That there are Degrees of Faith. 2. That we ought to grow from Degree to Degree.

FIRST, There are Degrees of Faith. As there are two Acts of Faith; one whereby we take *Chriſt*, which we call a direct Act, whereby we truly lay Hold on Him, and receive Him as our LORD and Saviour; the other whereby we know we have received Him, called a reflex Act, which

is

is Aſſurance, ſo both theſe receive Degrees. The firſt Act of Faith receives Degrees in three Reſpects; the laſt in one Reſpect.

THE firſt Act of Faith, by which we take *Chriſt* offered unto us, admits this firſt Degree; in Reſpect of Perſuaſion. There is a great Degree of Perſwaſion, that *Chriſt* is offer'd, and that He is ours; and there is a leſs Degree of Perſuaſion alſo. 'Tis true we find this propoſed in the Word, that *Chriſt* is given to us; now tho' all real Believers are perſuaded of the Truth of this, yet are not all alike fully perſwaded of the Truth of it: And this we need not wonder at; for tho' it be Faith, and though the Perſuaſion be true, and good, and firm, yet notwithſtanding it may admit of Degrees, elſe any Man might object:

"IF a Man be fully perſuaded, what needs he more? If he be not fully perſuaded, it is not Faith." I anſwer, there are Degrees in the very Perſuaſion, tho' the Perſuaſion be good and true. As for Example; A Man may ſee a Thing by a little, glimmering Light, but when there come more Candles, he may ſee more clearly, although he ſaw it certainly before: So we may behold the Promiſes of GOD, and apply them to ourſelves, and yet this may admit more Degrees. When there is more Light, and more Arguments, when the Spirit of Adoption ſpeaks more clearly and fully to us, there may be a greater Degree of Perſuaſion: And therefore that Objection, That either it is not Faith, if there be Doubting; or, if it be firm in a Man, he needs no more, is not true. There is a full Perſwaſion, mention'd *Col.* ii. 2. which intimates, that there is a leſſer Degree of Faith than that: As, you know, a Ship may be car-

ried with a gentle Gale of Wind, as well as with a ſtronger Gale, tho' it go not quite ſo faſt. So likewiſe there is a little Faith mentioned *Matt.* xiv. 31. where our Saviour ſaid to *Peter*, *Why doſt thou doubt?* Certainly *Peter* believed, or elſe he could not caſt himſelf upon the Water; and yet there was Doubting mingled with his Faith.

SECONDLY, The direct Act of Faith admits Degrees in Regard of the Difficulty of the Things that are to be believed. As for Example, *Martha* and *Mary*, both believed in *Chriſt* when he feaſted with them; but when *Lazarus* was dead, and had been in the Grave four Days, it put them to a Stand to think how *Chriſt* could raiſe him again to Life: Now if they had been able to believe this, there had been a greater Degree of Faith. That was it that magnified *Abraham*'s Faith ſo; that when he was commanded to go and offer his Son, the Son in whom GOD had promiſed that his Seed ſhould be bleſſed, who was called *The Son of the Promiſe*, he believed that what GOD had promiſed, He was able alſo to perform, notwithſtanding this ſo great Difficulty, however to mere carnal Reaſon, the Thing ſeem'd impoſſible. Here was a great Degree of Faith, becauſe there was great Difficulty.

THIRDLY, The direct Act of Faith admits Degrees in Regard of the Extent of it; when there are more Things revealed: Thus *the Righteouſneſs of* GOD *is revealed from Faith to Faith*; that is, the Righteouſneſs of *Chriſt* was revealed in the Time of the Law and the Prophets: It was revealed obſcurely, and there was a little Faith among the *Jews* to believe it was enough to ſave them; but in the Days of the latter Prophets, when the Time drew nearer, there were greater Revelations, and

their

their Faith was greater. So the Apoſtles, when *Chriſt* was upon Earth, had a Degree of Faith, but when *Chriſt* aſcended, then there were more Revelations, then they grew *from Faith to Faith*, becauſe they grew from Revelation to Revelation; then the Spirit of GOD was ſent into their Hearts to reveal all Things, and to lead them into all Truth.

LASTLY, the Reflex Act of Faith that gives Aſſurance, that pacifieth and comforteth the Heart, by which we know and are perſwaded that we have taken *Chriſt*, and that our Sins are forgiven, admits likewiſe of Degrees. And here, as the Evidences of Sanctification are more, ſo is the Aſſurance; as the Apoſtle ſaith, *the Spirit witneſſeth to our Spirits*. We have Need of the Light of the Spirit, to judge of the Sincerity of the Graces we have; and as we receive more and more of this Light, ſo we grow by Degrees from Aſſurance to Aſſurance.

NOW for the ſecond Part of the Propoſition, that we muſt grow from Degree to Degree: For as Faith admits of Degrees, ſo we muſt labour to grow in all theſe Degrees.

FIRST, We muſt labour to grow to a more full and firm Aſſent to the Truth of the Goſpel Promiſes; by that Means we ſhall draw nearer to *Chriſt*, and receive Him in a greater Meaſure. The ſtronger the Aſſent is, that we give to the Promiſes of GOD, wherein he aſſures us of the Pardon of our Sins, wherein *Chriſt* is offered freely unto us, the more we take *Chriſt*; and ſo the Union is greater between us; we are link'd and knit together, and married, as it were, in a greater Degree.

SECONDLY, We muſt labour to grow in the Belief of hard Things propounded with ſlender Arguments, as well as of eaſy Things, which is the ſecond Thing wherein Faith admits Degrees; for this is very profitable. I will give you but theſe two Inſtances. You know what *Moſes* loſt, and what *Abraham* got: *Moſes* loſt *Canaan*, he loſt the Honour of carrying in the People, he loſt the Honour of concluding his Work, when he had taken ſo much Pains, and all for Want of Faith, becauſe he did not believe when he ſtruck the Rock. *Abraham* believed Things that were of a high and difficult Nature: You ſee what he got by it: For this Cauſe, ſaith the LORD, I will do thus and thus, *becauſe thou haſt not ſpared thine only Son.* This is repeated, *Rom.* iv. *Abraham being ſtrong in Faith, gave Glory to* GOD: And therefore you ſee, *Abraham* is ſet above all Men; he is called the *Father of all the Faithful*, becauſe he believed in GOD in ſo great a Matter. This you ſhall gain, if you will believe; it will bring you a great Reward, yea, it will not only bring a Reward, ſuch as *Abraham* had, but it will bring Increaſe of the ſame Faith. GOD will reveal more and more to you, and give you more of his Spirit, as He did to *Nathanael*: Believeſt thou for *this*, ſaith *Chriſt?* Thou ſhalt ſee greater Things than theſe.

THIRDLY, With Regard to the Extent of Faith; we ſhould labour to be filled full of Faith, by ſtudying the Word much; for therein will GOD reveal this Increaſe.

LASTLY, Labour to get full Aſſurance; for the more Aſſurance you have the more Love you ſhall have: And you ſhall do the more Work, when once you are aſſured that your *Labour ſhall not be in vain the* LORD; and likewiſe be ſtabliſhed in well-

well-doing. A Man will never hold out and be conſtant, 'till he come to have Aſſurance that he ſhall not loſe his Reward.

I EXHORT you, therefore, to grow in Faith. Content not yourſelves with a ſmall Meaſure. Believe fully and aſſuredly that your Sins are forgiven you; believe fully the Grace that is given you thro' *Chriſt*; truſt perfectly in the Grace brought in by *Chriſt*: It is our Fault that we do it not; and hence it is that our Joy is weak, our Grace is weak. Truſt perfectly, *that your Joy may be full*, that you may have full Communion and Fellowſhip with *Chriſt*. The Benefit is exceeding great when you truſt perfectly, and why will you not? Why ſhould you limit the *Holy one of* Iſrael, whoſe Mercy and Goodneſs is as his Majeſty?

IF you grow in Faith, you ſhall grow likewiſe in Joy; and that is a Thing which we have continual Need of; that is of hourly Uſe to comfort and ſtrengthen us, and to make us abound in the Works of the LORD; that helps us to go through all Variety of Conditions; that enables us to abound and to want, to paſs *through good Report and evil Report*, to ſuffer and endure Perſecution. Now that the more you grow in Faith, the more you will grow in Joy, you may learn from the Apoſtle, *Rom.* xv. 13. *The* GOD *of Peace fill you with all Joy by Believing*: So then the more we believe, the more Joy, the more Conſolation we have.

AGAIN, The more you grow in Faith, the more you ſhall gain the Favour of GOD, the more you ſhall win his Love. There is Nothing in the World doth ſo much win the Favour of GOD as a great Degree of Faith: And therefore, (tho' thou mayſt be ſaved with a leſs Degree, yet) that thou mayſt

mayſt be in a greater Degree of Favour, ſeek more Faith. Though it may be reckoned but a ſmall Matter to have a great Degree of GOD's Favour, yet it is the greateſt Dignity in the World. There is nothing that cauſeth GOD to ſet ſo much by us as Faith. When *Jacob* got the Name of *Iſrael*, when he prevailed with GOD, certainly it was the greateſt Bleſſing that ever he had; and this he obtained, becauſe he then ſhewed the greateſt Faith that ever he did. It was his ſtrong Faith that prevailed with GOD. Therefore, the more Faith you have, the more GOD prizeth you. It is this that wins his Love.

AGAIN, the more Faith you have, the more Glory you bring to GOD. If there be much Faith, there will be much Fruit. *Herein is my Father glorified*, (ſaith *Chriſt*) *that you bring forth much Fruit*. Faith is the Root of all Grace. Get much Faith then, if you will bear much Fruit, and bring much Glory to GOD. If a Man have but a little Faith, tho' he brings forth ſome Fruit, yet there will be Something wanting: But when a Man is an eminent Believer, when he is conſpicuous in Faith, when he is as a great Light that every Man turns his Eye to, then he is a Tree that brings forth much Fruit of Righteouſneſs, and herein GOD is glorified.

THE BREAST-PLATE OF FAITH and LOVE.

PART II.

Of EFFECTUAL FAITH.

1 THESS. i. 3.

* *Remembring your effectual Faith.*

IN the Verſe foregoing, the Apoſtle writes thus: *We give Thanks always for you all, making Mention of you in our Prayers without ceaſing.* Here he tells the *Theſſalonians*, that he not only prays for them, but likewiſe in his Prayer gives Thanks for them; and that not only once or twice

* So it runs in the Old Tranſlation.

and

and no more, or now and then by Fits, but he continued to do it, he did it conſtantly; *making mention of you in my Prayers*, (ſays he) *without ceaſing*. Then he names the Particulars for which he gave Thanks, which were theſe three: 1. For their *Effectual Faith*; 2. For their *Diligent Love*; And, 3. For their *Patient Hope*. And theſe three Graces he ſetteth forth three Ways.

FIRST, From the Property which diſtinguiſheth the true Faith from falſe Faith, the true Love from falſe Love, and the true Hope from falſe Hope. As if he had ſaid, I give not Thanks for every Faith, but for ſuch a Faith as is *effectual*: (That is the Property by which the Truth of Faith is diſcerned.) Again, not for every Love, but for ſuch a Love as is *laborious*, (for ſo the Word ſignifieth). Thirdly, not for every Hope, but for ſuch a Hope as makes you *patient*, (that is the Character by which you are to know true Hope). And this is the firſt Way whereby he deſcribeth theſe Graces.

SECONDLY, He deſcribeth them from the Object upon which theſe Graces are placed, and that is *Jeſus Chriſt* our LORD: So that he ſays thus much; I give Thanks for the Faith you have in *Chriſt*, for the Love you have towards Him, for the Hope you have of what He will do for you: Or, I give Thanks for that Faith, for that Love, for that Hope, that hath *Chriſt* for the Object of it.

THIRDLY, He deſcribeth theſe Graces from the Sincerity of them: I give Thanks for all theſe Graces that you have in the Sight of GOD, not in the Sight of Man only; as if he ſhould have ſaid; Many go for Believers in GOD, and for Lovers of GOD, and Men judge them ſo to be; but you are really

really ſo in the Sight of GOD, not only in the Sight of Men; not only in your own Apprehenſion, but in good Earneſt, in Sincerity.

I NEED not ſay more for the Opening of the Words. We will come then to the firſt Thing for which the Apoſtle gives Thanks, on the *Theſſalonians* Behalf; and that is, *Effectual Faith:* I will therefore deliver to you this Point; that *That Faith that ſaves us, muſt be effectual.*

HAVING ſaid ſo much of Faith, that it is that which ſaveth Men; and that there is no more required of you, but to take the *Gift of Righteouſneſs*; only that you receive *Chriſt*; that you only accept of that Juſtification, which GOD is ready to give to every Man, be he never ſo ungodly; leſt any Man ſhould be deceived, in ſuppoſing, that if he have but a naked Apprehenſion, and no more, he ſhall do well enough, I have choſen this Text, that you may know what Kind of Faith it is, that is required of us, in order to Salvation.

SAINT *Paul*, by uſing the Word *Effectual*, in this Place, intimates to us, that there is a Faith which is not effectual. We ſee, throughout the Scriptures, much Mention made of a certain Faith, which Men had, which yet was not a ſaving Faith. We ſee, *many came and believed* on our Saviour, *but He would not commit Himſelf to them: For He knew what was in their Hearts.* Here was Faith; nay further, it was ſuch as had ſome Effect too, (for it made them come to Him) and yet, for all this, it was not ſuch a Faith as GOD accepts; it was not effectual. So there came many that were *invited to the Wedding, ſo that the Houſe was full*; but yet every Man *had not a Wedding Garment.* They had a certain Faith which brought them to the

the Houſe, but they had not the Wedding Garment; that is, they had not ſuch a Faith as could bring forth in them a conjugal Affection, which is the Wedding Garment.

SEEING then, there is a Faith that is not effectual, we have the more Need to look to our own. As a Tradeſman when he hears that there are ſo many counterfeit Wares in the World, will be more careful how he chooſes; ſo we ſhould look the better to our Faith, ſeeing there is ſo much falſe Faith in the World. Therefore to open this Point, I will, I. ſhew the Cauſe, why there is ſo much uneffectual Faith. II. What it is for Faith to be effectual. III. The Reaſons why GOD will accept no other Faith; or, why we cannot be ſaved, unleſs we have ſuch a Faith.

I. THE Reaſons why the Faith of many is uneffectual, you will find to be Five. Firſt, The Taking of *Chriſt* upon Miſ-information. Secondly, The Taking Him out of Fear. Thirdly, The Taking Him more for Love of his Benefits, than of his Perſon. Fourthly, Want of Humiliation. Fifthly, Becauſe Faith is not grounded aright. To ſpeak of theſe more particularly:

FIRST, The Uneffectualneſs of Faith ariſeth upon our Taking of *Chriſt* upon Miſ-information, when we know not who it is that we take. Many do as the young Man that came running to *Chriſt*; he came haſtily, and made Account to be his Follower, 'till *Chriſt* let him know, what it was to follow Him; that if he would *be his Servant, he muſt ſell all that he had:* That is, take up his Croſs, deny himſelf daily, and part with All, or any Thing for his Sake: And then he went away ſorrowing. Therefore ſaith *Chriſt*, *Let him that*

builds

builds a Houſe, ſet down before what it will coſt. If a Man conſiders not beforehand what *Chriſt* looks for at his Hands, it will go hard with him. For a Man can hardly endure, to be ſcoffed at, to have every Man his Enemy, to part with all his Friends, to live a deſpiſed Man, to ſuffer Perſecution, that the End of one Perſecution ſhould be the Beginning of another, and the End of one Suffering, the Beginning of another. Again, becauſe Men conſider not beforehand, that they muſt crucify the Fleſh with the Affections and Luſts, when they are urged to this, they revolt; they cannot bear to have their inward Luſts and Deſires ſo mortified, to be ſo ſtrait-laced in every Thing. Hence many, in good Moods, will embrace Religion; but we ſoon ſee an End of it. When *Chriſt* came to *Jeruſalem*, how ready were the People to receive Him, with *Bleſſed is He that cometh in the Name of the* LORD? But how ſoon were they gone again? So, many young Comers, are ready to take upon them the Profeſſion of *Chriſt*; but when they ſee that *Chriſt* and the World, *Chriſt* and Pleaſures cannot ſtand together, then they go back, and their Faith proves ineffectual.

A SECOND Cauſe of the Uneffectualneſs of Faith is, when Men take *Chriſt* out of Fear. Many there are, that, when GOD affrights them a little with the Terrors of the Law, when their Conſciences are troubled, when they begin to apprehend Hell, ſo long as they are in ſuch a Condition, are willing to take *Chriſt*; but as ſoon as there is an End of thoſe Terrors, there is an End of their Religion, ſo that their Faith proves ineffectual. *Pharoah*, when he was in the preſent Strait, would do any Thing; ſo many Men while they are under great Croſſes, Afflictions, and Diſgraces in the World, will be religious; but let them have Peace and Proſperity again, and they will forget GOD. When a Man

comes to apprehend Death, what will he do for Salvation at ſuch a Time? A Merchant though he loves his Goods never ſo well, yet when the Ship is ready to ſink, will caſt them out; he is willing to loſe them, rather than to loſe his Life: So when a Man comes to ſtand in the Gate of Deſtruction, when he ſees Heaven and Hell before him, he is ready to do any Thing then, not becauſe he loves *Chriſt*, but to ſave himſelf. He is then very forward to make Promiſes; but as they proceed from Fear, they are not laſting.

THIRDLY, when Men take *Chriſt*, not out of Love to his Perſon, but out of Love to thoſe Advantages they ſhall have by Him, this makes Faith ineffectual. Men do in this Caſe, as thoſe that marry for Wealth; if they miſs of the Money, they care for their Wives no longer: So when Men look at nothing but Heaven, disjoined from *Chriſt*; or, when they look for great Matters by *Chriſt* in this World, and find it quite otherwiſe, then they are ready to ſlip from *Chriſt* again. Theſe Men ſeek Mercy, not Grace. If they can be but aſſured, that it ſhall go well with them, this is all they look for; but as for Grace to be enabled to obey *Chriſt* in all Things, to repair the Image of GOD in their Hearts, they deſire it not. They enquire not, What Excellency, and what Beauty is there in *Chriſt*; what is He, that we ſhould love Him? But, What Good ſhall we get by Him? Whereas, thoſe that take *Chriſt* in good Earneſt, look upon the Excellencies of *Chriſt*, as He is conſidered in himſelf: Not that the other is excluded: For we may look at the Advantages, that we have by Him, but not upon them alone.

FOURTHLY, Faith proves ineffectual for Want of Preparation, and Humiliation that ſhould go before

fore it. *Moſes* ſaith, *The* LORD *your* GOD *will circumciſe your Hearts, and then you ſhall love Him with all your Soul, and with all your Strength.* Deut. xxx. 6. As if he had ſaid, it is impoſſible you ſhould cleave to GOD, and love Him with all your Hearts, except firſt your Hearts be circumciſed; therefore the LORD *your* GOD *will circumciſe your Hearts*; that is, He will humble you, He will break your Hearts, He will take away thoſe ſinful Deſires, that abounded in your Hearts before; and when that is done, then you ſhall love the LORD in good Earneſt. Now, if a Man come to take *Chriſt* before he be thus circumciſed, he takes Him in vain, he takes Him ſo, as that he cannot hold Him. When Men come to *Chriſt*, before the Law hath been a ſufficient Schoolmaſter to them, they care not for Him; they take Him negligently, and therefore they hold Him not. Before *Chriſt* came into the World, He would have Way made before Him: So, before He will come into a Man's Heart, the Mountains muſt be brought down, the Spirit of *Elias* muſt make Way; that is, there muſt be a ſharp Miniſtry to ſhew Men their Sins, that they may be throughly humbled, and prepared, or elſe they will never take *Chriſt* ſo as to keep cloſe to Him. 'Till a Man be ſoundly humbled, he never accounts Sin to be the greateſt Evil; and 'till he do that, he never accounts *Chriſt* to be the greateſt Good; and if a Man do not reckon *Chriſt* to be the chief Good of all, there will be ſomewhat, which will be eſteemed before Him; and when that comes, he lets go *Chriſt*. But when there is a ſound Humiliation, which makes a Man prize *Chriſt* above all Things, then Faith proves effectual; a Man goes through with the Work; he cleaves ſo to *Chriſt*, as that he will not part with Him: But for Want of this, becauſe Way is not made, becauſe the Mountains are not brought down, becauſe

the Miniſtry is not ſharp enough to prepare them, hence it is that their Faith is vain, and comes to nothing.

FIFTHLY and laſtly, The Faith of Men often proves ineffectual, becauſe it is not well grounded; they take to themſelves a Perſuaſion of the Remiſſion of their Sins, upon an uncertain Foundation; they are not built upon the Rock: They take *Chriſt*, but they are not well-bottom'd: For there is a certain falſe Perſuaſion, which is nothing elſe, but a ſtrong Fancy, which makes a Man think his Sins are forgiven; but when it comes to Examination, he can give no ſound Reaſon for it. When Men take *Chriſt* in this Manner, and perſuade themſelves that their Sins are remitted, this Perſuaſion having no good Ground, continues not. A falſe Perſwaſion drove them to *Chriſt*, and a contrary Wind will drive them from Him again.

II. HAVING thus ſhewn the Cauſes of the Uneffectualneſs of Faith; I am next to declare unto you, What it is that maketh Faith effectual. And here we will ſhew you three Things: 1. In what Senſe it is called *effectual* Faith: For the very Opening of this Word, which the Apoſtle uſeth, will open a Window to us, to ſee into the Nature of the Thing itſelf. 2. We will ſhew you particularly and diſtinctly, wherein this Effectualneſs of Faith conſiſts. 3. We will ſhew you how this Faith is made effectual in us.

1. FOR the Opening of the Word, *Effectual*, in Order to ſhew the Nature of Effectual Faith: You muſt note, that a Thing is ſaid to be *effectual*, in four Reſpects:

FIRST

FIRST, We ſay a Thing is *effectual*, when it doth its Office, when it exerciſeth its proper Function; and when it doth not that, then we ſay it is uneffectual. In this Senſe, *Faith* is ſaid to be *effectual*, when it doth the Thing that GOD expects of it, and that is, to take *Chriſt*. If Faith then take *Chriſt*, it is effectual. But to ſhew you a little further, what this proper Function of Faith is: It is, when a Man is ſo far perſuaded of the Truth of the Promiſes, that he is willing to take *Chriſt*; and tho' there be ſome Doubtings, yet, if Faith come ſo far as to pitch on *Chriſt*, to chuſe Him, to take Him, it is effectual. Now, if you would know what it is to pitch on *Chriſt*, and to take Him, though there be ſome Doubt, or ſome Fear, you ſhall know it by this: If a Man have ſo taken Him, that he is ſtill growing, his Faith is ſtill prevailing, ſtill overcoming thoſe Doubts and Fears from Day to Day, tho' it be not perfect, yet it is ſaving and effectual Faith. It is ſo far from being true, that Faith muſt needs be without all Doubting at firſt, that we may boldly ſay, generally it is not Faith, except it have Doubting, unleſs there be ſome Fears, unleſs there be ſome Troubles within, that ſtrive againſt it. For certainly, there is no Man that ordinarily hath perfect Faith at the firſt, ſo as to ſet his Heart fully at Peace. Where there is all Peace, where there is no Queſtioning, where the Heart is not perplexed and troubled, it is a Sign the ſtrong Man poſſeſſeth the Houſe wholly. Therefore mark this Point to your Comfort, that if there be but ſo much Faith, as will produce this Work of taking *Chriſt*, though there be ſome Doubtings mingled with it, yet it is properly effectual Faith.

SECONDLY, A Thing is ſaid to be *effectual*, as it is oppoſed to that which is vain and empty; to

that which is but a Shadow of it, not the Thing indeed. So Faith is ſaid to be effectual, when it is true, real, and ſubſtantial; when it is oppoſed to vain Faith, or a mere groundleſs Imagination.

THIRDLY, A Thing is ſaid to be effectual, when it is active: If a Pilot in a Ship, ſit ſtill and do Nothing there, we may ſay, he is an uneffectual Pilot: So when Faith does not ſhew itſelf in the Fruits of it, this is uneffectual Faith; whereas Faith ſhould be in the Soul, as the Soul is in the Body, ſtill ſtirring and ſhewing itſelf by Motion. *Faith* then is ſaid to be *effectual*, when it is lively, fruitful, and active in the Soul of Man.

LAST of all, a Thing is ſaid to be effectual, when it goes through with the Work that it hath in Hand; ſo that Faith is ſaid to be effectual, that goes thro' with the Work it undertakes; that ſanctifieth the Heart throughout in Reſpect of Parts, and in Regard of Time; ſuch a Faith as overcomes Sin, and perfects the Work of our Salvation; in theſe four Senſes *Faith* is ſaid to be *effectual*. And this is the firſt Thing.

2. THE ſecond Thing which we undertook, was to ſhew you wherein the Effectualneſs of Faith conſiſts. And that is, 1. In having the Preparation ſound and full, that makes Way for it. 2. In having the Underſtanding clear; that is, when a Man believeth the Promiſes upon ſure Grounds, and ſeeth them diſtinctly. 3. In a right Taking of *Chriſt*. 4. In that it turns not only the Will, but all the Affections; and ſhoots itſelf into Life and Practice. But to be more particular:

FIRST, Faith is effectual, when there is a good Way made for it; when there is ſound Humiliation

tion going before it, ſuch as makes a Man fit for the Kingdom of GOD. When a Man is not thro'ly humbled to know what Sin is, and what the Wrath of GOD is, he is not fit for the Kingdom of GOD; but if he come to *Chriſt*, if he begin to believe, he will go back again. This is that which is required. *If there be any worthy, let your Peace come upon them:* That is, if there be any, when you come to preach the Goſpel, that are ſo far broken and humbled, ſo far convinced of their Sins, by the Operation of the *Holy Ghoſt*, that they prize me ſo, that they will not let me go for any Thing, ſuch a Man is worthy of me, and your Peace ſhall come upon him: It ſhall come effectually upon him, abide with him, and ſave his Soul forever. So, I ſay, this Preparation is the firſt Thing wherein effectual Faith conſiſts: Not that it is the very ſame Thing as Believing; but yet it is that, without which Faith can never be found and effectual.

SECONDLY, When there is ſuch a Preparation made, yet if a Man's Underſtanding ſee not the Truth of the Promiſe ſo clearly that he can build on it, his Faith will not be effectual. Therefore when he hath the firſt Ground right, the next Thing that a Man muſt do, is to believe the Scriptures, to know that they are the ſure Word of GOD. After that, he muſt conſider the Promiſes, and examine them, and being fully convinced of the Truth of them, muſt appropriate them to himſelf, ſo as to be able to ſay, "I find the Scriptures true; I find theſe Promiſes in the Scriptures; I believe them; I find *Chriſt* offered to every Creature under Heaven; I find that even I have a Warrant to take Him; I find that He is mine, and I am his." And when Men thus believe; when they know *Chriſt* to be theirs; then they may be truly ſaid to be built,

built, to be grounded in Faith. This is that that St. *John* ſaith, 1 *John* i. 19. *We know that we are of* GOD; that is, it is not a Thing that we are uncertainly perſuaded of; but we know it as certainly as any Man knows a Thing that is before his Eyes. And when the Underſtanding of a Man is thus clear and built upon the Word; this is the ſecond Thing wherein the Effectualneſs of Faith conſiſts.

THIRDLY, the third Things, wherein the Efficacy of Faith conſiſts, is, when we rightly take *Chriſt*; that is, when the Will takes Him out of Love; not out of Fear, not for Advantage only, nor out of Miſtake; when we take Him in ſuch a Manner, as that we are knit and united to Him, as the Soul of *Jonathan* was to *David*, and are content to leave Father and Mother, and all that is dear in this World and to become one Spirit with Him. Now, I ſay, when you ſo take *Chriſt*, that you bring Him into your Hearts, as it is expreſſed Eph. iii. 17. *That* Chriſt *may dwell in your Hearts by Faith:* That is, when there is ſuch an Union made between *Chriſt* and us thro' Faith, that He comes into our Hearts, and lives there, and we are ſo united to Him, that we live in Him; then it is an effectual Faith.

FOURTHLY, there is a further Act to make Faith effectual, and that is the Turning of the whole Soul, and Shooting of it forth in our whole Lives and Practice; the Doing of the Things that *Chriſt* commands. *In* Chriſt Jeſus *neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor Uncircumciſion, but Faith that worketh by Love.* Gal. v. 6. As if the Apoſtle had ſaid, many will be ready to believe in *Chriſt*, but will do Nothing for Him, they will not work. Now Working is in doing, or in ſuf-

fering

fering: For in ſuffering there is a Work as well as in doing, only it is a Work of more Difficulty. Or, if they will do any Thing for *Chriſt*, it is not out of Love, but for other Reſpects: Perhaps out of ſome Flaſh or good Mood. To work out of Love, is the Property of effectual Faith. When Faith hath once taken *Chriſt*, it muſt ſhoot itſelf into all the Affections; and when they are all ſet on Work, Endeavour will follow. If the Will be ſet on Work, the reſt will follow after it. *Love* will follow, *Deſire* after *Chriſt* will follow, *Fear* to offend Him will follow, *Repentance* and Turning from *Satan* will follow, Bringing forth good *Fruits* and *Obedience* will follow. Therefore it is that you find the Promiſes made ſo promiſcuouſly, ſometimes to one Thing, ſometimes to another: Sometimes, he that *repenteth* ſhall be ſaved: Sometimes, he that *believeth* ſhall be ſaved: Sometimes, he that *obeyeth* ſhall be ſaved: becauſe when Faith is effectual, it hath all theſe with it.

THE third and laſt Thing I propoſed was, to ſhew how Faith is made effectual in us. It is made effectual by the Spirit of GOD. We are not able to believe of ourſelves, nay, we are ſo far from it, that we ſtrive againſt it; ſo that, if GOD Himſelf put not his Hand to the Work, no Man can believe. You may think, when you ſee ſuch general Propoſitions as theſe, that *whoſoever believeth ſhall be ſaved*; it is eaſy to bring this Home in particular, and to ſay, This Pardon belongs to me. My Brethren, it is eaſy to ſay ſo, but another Thing for a Man indeed to believe it. For a Man to take *Chriſt* ſo, as to *deny himſelf*; to take Him ſo, as to *mortify his Luſts*, ſo, as to *take up his Croſs*; ſo, as to obey *Chriſt*, to *follow* Him in all Things, is more than any one can do, unleſs GOD enable him with his almighty Power. For the Heart of every Man by Nature,

Nature, is ſo ſhut up againſt *Chriſt*, that it will give no Entrance to him. He may ſtand and knock long enough, unleſs GOD Himſelf break off the Bolts. Unleſs He burſt open theſe *everlaſting Doors, that the King of Glory may come in*, we will not admit him, but keep him out. Every Man naturally hath an hard *Heart that cannot repent*, that cannot turn from Sin. He will be content perhaps to take Him for a Saviour; but to take Him ſo as to obey Him, to fear Him, to love Him; this no Man will do, or can do, unleſs the Holy Ghoſt enable him.

BUT you will aſk, "How doth the Holy Ghoſt do it?" I anſwer by theſe three Acts: 1. By applying the Law to a Man's Conſcience. 2. By ſhewing the Excellency and Riches of *Chriſt*. And, 3. By bearing Teſtimony to our Spirits that theſe Riches are ours.

FIRST, The Holy Ghoſt puts an Efficacy into the Law, and makes it powerful to work on the Heart, to make a Man poor in Spirit, that ſo he may be fit to receive the Goſpel. For the Law, tho' it be fit to humble a Man, yet it is no Worker of Sanctification. If a Man were able to do any Thing, he were able to ſee the Righteouſneſs the Law requires, and how far he is from it, and to diſcern the Curſe upon not doing of it, and yet this he is not able to do, without the *Spirit of Bondage*. The Spirit of Bondage muſt make the Law effectual, as well as the *Spirit of Adoption* doth the Goſpel: That is, except the LORD Himſelf preſs the Law on our Hearts, ſo as to cauſe it to make Sin appear to us, we, that are the Miniſters of GOD may diſcover your Sins, we may ſhew you the Rectitude required in the Law, we may ſhew you your Danger, yet all will be to no Purpoſe. If GOD ſharpen Sin, and cauſe it to uſe its Sting,

this

this makes a Man fit to receive *Chriſt:* Otherwiſe, if the *Sons of Thunder* ſhould ſpeak to Men, if we ſhould *come in the Spirit and Power of* Elijah, nay, if GOD Himſelf ſhould thunder from Heaven, all would not move the Heart of a Man, all would not awaken him to ſee his Sins. We may as well ſhake the Earth, as ſtrike the Heart of a Sinner without the Work of GOD: For, though the Law be a Sword, yet unleſs GOD take that Sword into his Hand, and ſtrike therewith Himſelf, it ſhall not be able to wound a Sinner. Therefore the firſt Work of the Holy Ghoſt is to awaken a Sinner, to ſet Sin upon him, that he may be fit to receive *Chriſt*.

SECONDLY, when the Heart is thus prepared by the Spirit, then the Holy Ghoſt ſhews us what we have by *Chriſt*; He ſhews *the unſearchable Riches of* Chriſt, *what is the Hope of our Calling, and the glorious Inheritance prepared for the Saints, and what is the exceeding Greatneſs of his Power in them that believe.* Eph. i. 19.

YOU will ſay, perhaps a Man may ſee theſe Things without the Help of the Spirit. It is true in ſome Manner he may; but not in ſuch a Manner as ſhall affect him. You may read the Scriptures a thouſand Times over, you may underſtand them, yet you ſhall not be affected with them, 'till the Holy Ghoſt ſhews them unto you. This is the Secret of GOD; He only revealeth theſe ſpiritual Things prepared for us in *Chriſt*, in ſuch a Manner, as that we ſhall love and embrace them. GOD not only ſhews us the Advantages we have by *Chriſt*, but the Excellency of *Chriſt*, ſo as to make us in Love with his Perſon, as well as be ready to receive the Privileges with Him. *We have received the Spirit of* GOD, ſays the Apoſtle, *by which we know the Things that are given us of* GOD; *they are re-*

revealed to us by the Spirit: 1. Col. ii. 12. As if he had ſaid, if you ſaw them no more than other Men do, you would be no more affected with them, than they are: But when you have the Spirit of GOD to ſhew you the Things that are given you of GOD, that is the Thing that works upon you. Therefore the LORD taketh that as a Peculiar to Himſelf: *I will write my Law in your Hearts:* That is, I will make you affected with the Things that I ſhall ſhew you; and this is the Teaching of GOD.

THIRDLY, when the Heart is prepared by the Law, and when theſe Things are ſo ſhewed unto us, that we prize them, and long after them, there muſt be a third Thing; that is, to take them to ourſelves, to believe that they are ours; and there needeth a Work of the Spirit for this too: For, tho' the Promiſes are never ſo clear, yet, having Nothing but the Promiſes, you will never be able to apply them to yourſelves: But when the Holy Ghoſt ſhall ſay, *Chriſt is thine, and theſe Things belong to thee*; when the Spirit ſhall bear Witneſs with thy Spirit, by an immediate Work of his own, that GOD is thy Father, then thou ſhalt believe. This is neceſſarily required, and without this we ſhall not believe.

Now the Holy Ghoſt bears Teſtimony to our Spirits two Ways. 1. By clearing of the Promiſes, and ſhining into our Hearts, with ſuch a Light as makes us able to diſcern, and to believe them. 2. By an immediate Voice, by which He ſpeaketh immediately to our Spirits; ſo that we can ſay, as they ſaid, *John* xvi. 29. *Now Thou ſpeakeſt plainly, and ſpeakeſt no Parable*; we underſtand Thee fully.

'TILL

'TILL the Holy Ghoſt ſpeaks to us, we are in a Cloud; GOD is hid from us, we cannot ſee Him clearly; but when we have this Spirit of Adoption, to give us this Witneſs, then we believe plainly indeed. Therefore in *Iſai.* lvii. 19. the LORD ſaith, *I create the Fruit of the Lips; Peace, Peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near:* That is, the Miniſters may ſpeak Peace to you, but unleſs I add a Power of mine own to his Word; that is, ſuch an almighty Power as I uſed in the Creation, it ſhall never bring Peace to you. I create the Fruit of the Lips; that is, the Words of the Miniſter to be Peace, otherwiſe they would be ineffectual. Therefore, I ſay, there muſt be a Work of the Spirit to a perſuade a Man in ſuch a Caſe. Let a Miniſter come to them that are in Deſpair; they will not apprehend the Promiſes, tho' he uſe never ſo clear Reaſons, tho' he argue with them never ſo ſtrongly, 'till GOD Himſelf open the Clouds, and ſend his Spirit into the Heart, to give a ſecret Witneſs to him; 'till there be a Work of GOD's Spirit joining with the Promiſes, we find by Experience, our Labour is loſt in propoſing them. It is true, we ought to do this, and every Man is bound to look to the Word, becauſe *Faith cometh by Hearing*; and to hearken to the Miniſtry, for it is GOD's Ordinance to breed Faith in the Heart; but yet 'till there be a Work of the Spirit, a Man ſhall never be ſo perſuaded, as to have any ſure Comfort. *Chriſt* may be offered, yet when a Man comes to apply Him to himſelf, he is no more able to do it, than a dead Man to ſtir himſelf. Therefore the ſame Power that raiſed *Chriſt* from the Dead, is required to work Faith in our Hearts: It is as great a Work to move a Man's Heart to *Chriſt*, as to put Life into a dead Man. We are naturally as unapt and backward to take *Chriſt*, as a dead Man is to receive Life. So

that when we preach, except there be a ſecret Voice of the Spirit of *Chriſt* ſpeaking to your Hearts, as we do to your Ears, and ſaying; *Come and take Chriſt*, no Man will come.

III. YOU have now been ſhewn what effectual Faith is; wherein the Efficacy of it conſiſts; and how it is wrought. Now laſtly, we are to ſhew you the Reaſon why GOD accepts no Faith but that which is effectual.

THE Reaſons may be theſe four: 1. Becauſe if it be not effectual, it is not Faith at all; and if it be not Faith, it is no Wonder that He doth not accept of it. I ſay, it is no more Faith, than a dead Man is a Man: It hath only the Name and Shadow of Faith, and therefore GOD accepts it not.

2. IF Faith be not effectual, there will be no Love; and therefore GOD cannot accept it: For He will ſave none, unleſs they love Him, for that Condition is every where put in. *All Things ſhall work together for Good to them that love Him:* And He hath *prepared a Crown for them that love Him.*

3. IF Faith be not effectual, it will not purify the Heart, and enable Men to deny all worldly Luſts, *and to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World*; and therefore GOD will not accept of it: For unleſs this be done, the End of *Chriſt*'s Coming into the World, ſhould be fruſtrated: For, for this Cauſe was He manifeſted, *That He might deſtroy the Works of the Devil*, and *for this End hath the Grace of* GOD *appeared, that Men ſhould deny Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts:* And for this End did He give Himſelf, *to purify to Himſelf a peculiar People zealous of good Works.* He comes

comes to be a King, as well as a Saviour, to rule among his People, to have Men obey Him.

4. LASTLY, If Faith be not effectual, it will not be operative and productive of good Works. Now good Works are required of Neceſſity, as the Way to Salvation. *We are* GOD's *Workmanſhip, created in* Jeſus Chriſt *unto good Works, which He hath ordained, that we ſhould walk in them*, Eph. ii. 10. GOD judgeth us according to our Works, *Rom.* ii. 6. and at the laſt Day, the Reward will be pronounced according to that which Men have done. Therefore GOD will accept of no Faith, but that which is active and fruitful.

WE come now to make ſome Uſe of what hath been ſaid:

FIRST, If it be only an effectual Faith, which GOD accepteth, then this juſtifieth our Doctrine againſt the *Papiſts*, that ſay, we teach that only Faith juſtifieth, and require no good Works. I ſay, we teach, that not a naked, but an effectual Faith doth it. We both agree in this, that Works are neceſſarily required to Salvation, *that no Man ſhall ſee* GOD without *Pureneſs of Heart*, and Integrity of Life. We ſay, Except Men *mortify the Deeds of the Body by the Spirit, they ſhall die.* But then here is the Difference: They ſay that Faith and Works both are required to juſtify; we ſay, that Nothing is required but Faith; but we ſay, moreover that it muſt be an effectual Faith, a Faith productive of good Works.

IF it be objected, "That Works and Love are to Faith, as the Soul is to the Body: *(For as the Body without the Soul is dead, ſo Faith without Works is dead:)* Therefore Faith juſtifieth not, but

Works:" I anſwer; You take the Compariſon amiſs: For the Scope of it is this; As a ſoulleſs Body is dead, and nothing worth; ſo is a workleſs Faith. The Meaning is not, that Works are as the Soul, and Faith as the Body; but, as a Man, when he looks upon a Carcaſs, and ſeeth no Life in it, no Pulſe, no Motion, no Senſe, knows ſuch a Body is Nothing worth: So when we ſee a Faith without Motion, that hath no Pulſe, that hath no Expreſſion of Life in it, we know ſuch a Faith is of no Worth.

HOWEVER, tho' good Works be not required for Juſtification, yet this may be a Motive to perform them; GOD rewards us, and afflicts us according to them. He is the *Father, that judgeth every one according to his Works*, 1 *Pet.* i. 17. That is, if our Works be good, He is ready to reward us; and if we perſevere in Well-doing, the greater is our Reward; but if we fail, He is ready to chaſtiſe us. And not only this, but we require good Works of Neceſſity, as well as the *Papiſts*. We ſay, you muſt have good Works, or elſe you cannot be finally ſaved; for except you have repented, except you have Love as well as Faith, *Chriſt* is not in you: *And know yet not, that* Chriſt Jeſus *is in you, except ye be Reprobates?* 2 *Cor.* iii. 5.

THE ſecond Uſe that we ſhould make of what has been ſaid, is this: If Nothing be accepted, but that Faith which is effectual, we ſhould learn hence, that if we will grow in Obedience, we muſt grow in Faith: For all Efficacy muſt come from Faith. Therefore, when you find any Coldneſs, any Weakneſs, any Languiſhing, get an Increaſe Faith, and all other Graces will grow. If you find you cannot pray, that your Knees are feeble, and you cannot run the Ways of GOD's Commandments;

as,

as, when the Branches are weak and withering, we uſe to dung the Root; ſo labour to ſtrengthen your Faith, and that will enable you to do all Things.

THIS will be of much Uſe to us in many Caſes. When a Sin is committed, we ſhould labour to recover ourſelves out of that Relapſe. But which is the Way? By labouring to get Aſſurance of the Forgiveneſs of it. Go to GOD to ſtrengthen thy Faith, and that is the Way to get out of Sin. So if there be a ſtrong Luſt that thou art to grapple with, and canſt not get the Victory over; the Way is to get an Increaſe of Faith, an Increaſe of Aſſurance: For, the more Faith is increaſed, the more Love there is; the more the Heart is inclined to GOD, the more Ability there is to ſtrive againſt the Corruption that is in you. And again, if a Man find he wants Patience, Thankfulneſs, or any other Grace, the Way is not to read moral Writers, and ſeek Inſtructions from them; but go and ſtrengthen thy Faith, and that ſhall enable thee to do Wonders, far above all that the moſt accurate Moraliſt can teach you to do. To do otherwiſe, is but to water the Branches, and let the Root alone.

THE Buſineſs of us Miniſters ſhould be, to lay this main Foundation, and build up our Hearers in this, and the Reſt will follow. *Paul*, that great Maſter-Builder, in all his Epiſtles, lays down the Foundation of Faith; and after that he deduceth Particulars, and buildeth on it. And your main Buſineſs is to conſider, Whether you have Faith? And when you have that, then ſtrive againſt particular Vices, and adorn yourſelves with particular Graces. For Want of this Foundation it is, that we ordinarily find, that when Men reſolve to give over their wicked Company, Drinking, Gam-

ing, and the like; it holds perhaps only for a Day or two, it comes to Nothing, becauſe they go to work without Faith: Therefore when you have theſe Purpoſes, take the right Courſe; labour to believe the Promiſes, to be aſſured, that you are tranſlated from Death to Life; and then your Purpoſes will hold; and 'till then, they are in vain.

In the third Place; If Nothing pleaſe God, but what comes from effectual Faith; then we ſhould learn to judge aright of our Works. There be many Works, that have a fair Shew in the View of Men, and perhaps in your own Opinion: But if there be not Faith in thoſe Works, God regards them not. When *Abraham* did that great Work, in offering his Son, (the greateſt Work that is recorded in the Book of God) yet, ſaith the Apoſtle there, *Do ye not obſerve how Faith wrought with his Works?* That is to ſay, If Faith had not ſet him on Work to do this; if Faith had not been the Spring to ſet this Wheel going, God had not accepted this. So do whatſoever you will, further than Faith works with you in all that you do, God regards it not. Take the moſt excellent Works that can be performed, God ſets them at no higher a Price, than He finds Faith in them: He weighs by that: Therefore when you go about any Thing, labour to ſee that Faith ſet you to work.

Now to do a Thing in Faith, is to do it out of Perſuaſion of God's Love to me, merely for his Sake whom I have choſen, to whom I give myſelf. He is one that I know loves me; and therefore, tho' there were no Reward for it, I would ſerve Him. This is a Work of Faith. And this is properly Godlineſs. For what is Godlineſs, but that which is done to God? But ſuch Things, and ſuch Qualities as have an Eye and Reſpect to Him?

Him? Conſider, how it is with yourſelves; If a a Man ſhould do any Thing for you; yet, if you be perſuaded this comes not out of Love, nor of true Reſpect to you, whatſoever it be, you regard it not. If it be but a ſmall Thing, if it be done out of Love, you reſpect it. So it is with GOD; Works that come from Faith and Love, (for thoſe I reckon to be all one) thoſe He reſpects wondrouſly.

EVERY natural Man thinks, that Alms-deeds, and doing Good to the Poor, are good Works; but they are not abſolutely ſo: We may do the greateſt Works of this Nature, and yet they may have no Excellency in them at all; and that becauſe they are not done in Faith. Again, they exclude common Actions of Life, as if they were not good Works; whereas even the ordinary Works of our Calling, our ordinary Service from Day to Day, if it come from Faith, if it be done as to the LORD, He accepts, and they are good Works indeed. We ſhould therefore learn to judge aright of our Works, to help us againſt the common Opinion of Men.

AGAIN, Fourthly, if Faith be ſuch a Thing, that no Works are accepted without it, that no Branch will grow, except it come from this Root; you ſhould learn to judge aright, whether your Faith be a right Faith, or no: And that you may know by this:

WHERE there is a true Faith, there is a ſecret Perſuaſion wrought in the Heart, whereby GOD aſſures you that He is yours, and you are his; as you have it, *Rev.* ii. 17. *To him that overcometh, will I give that hidden Manna, and a white Stone, with a new Name written in it, that he only knows*

that

that receives it. Now would you know whether you have true Faith? See. Have you ever had any of that hidden *Manna?* Have you had a ſecret Perſuaſion of GOD's Love to you, which hath been as ſweet as *Manna* to you; which you have fed on, as the *Iſraelites* fed on *Manna*; which gives you Life, as *Manna* gave Life to them? Only this is a hidden *Manna*, it lies not abroad; others ſee it not, but your Hearts ſecretly feed on it. Again: Hath GOD given thee the white Stone with a new Name written in it? That is, the Stone of Abſolution? (as the Manner was among the *Athenians*, to give the Sentence of Abſolution by white Stones, as the Sentence of Condemnation by black Stones.) Hath he ever opened the Clouds? Hath He ever ſhewed Himſelf to you, and *made your Hearts glad with the Light of his Conntenance, in his Beloved?* Have you ever found this Work in yourſelf, that after Trouble and Diſquiet within, upon a Sight of your Sins, GOD hath ſpoken Peace to you; that He hath ſaid to your Soul, *I am thy Salvation?* Then reſt aſſured, thou haſt right Faith.

OBSERVE here, GOD's general Method of dealing with Sinners: He ſends a Wind that rends the Rocks, and brings down the Mountains, ſo much as makes the Way plain, before He can come in the *Soft* Voice. There muſt go always a Work of Humiliation before the Teſtimony of the Spirit. But miſtake not here; as if turbulent Sorrow, and violent Diſquiet of Mind, muſt always go before Peace: For it is not abſolutely required that there ſhould much Trouble go before. For altho' it be true, that GOD never ſpeaks Peace, but when ſome Trouble, ſome convincing of the Spirit hath gone before; yet the Promiſe is made to the Coming to *Chriſt*, and not to the Preparation thereto. If a Man get to his Journey's End, it is no Matter how he

he came there. If a Man find that he is in *Chriſt*, and hath a Teſtimony of Sonſhip from his Spirit, tho' he have not had ſuch a Work of Humiliation, as perhaps he expected, yet let him not doubt of the Soundneſs of his Faith. If the Mountains are broken down (after what Manner ſo ever it was) that is enough: For if there come a ſoft Voice after, whatſoever Preparations were before (which are divers, for GOD works ſometimes after one Manner, and ſometimes after another): Thou haſt then Reaſon to joy in the GOD of thy Salvation; inaſmuch as true Faith is wrought in thy Heart.

BUT now, what is this *Soft* Voice? This I ſhall endeavour to explain: And I take it to conſiſt in two Things: 1. One Thing is, when there is a Clearing of the Promiſe. When we open the Promiſes, if GOD doth not join with us, and clear them to you, by kindling a Light within, you ſhall not be able to build upon theſe Promiſes. For tho' it be true, the Word is near you, and the Promiſes are even *in your Mouths*, yet, except GOD ſhew them, as clear as they are, you cannot ſee them. When *Jeſus* ſtood by *Mary Magdalen*, He was near enough, but, 'till her Eyes were opened, ſhe ſaw Him not: So, when we preach theſe Promiſes, when we lay them open, as near as may be, yet it muſt be the Work of the Spirit, to let you ſee them ſo as to reſt on them. Therefore that is one Part of this *Soft* Voice to open the Goſpel unto you. 2. The other is the immediate Teſtimony of the Spirit, ſpoken of, *Rom.* viii. 16. *The Spirit beareth Witneſs with our Spirit:* When GOD comes, and by a ſecret Teſtimony of the Spirit, worketh a Perſuaſion in the Heart, that He is a Father, that he is a Friend, that is reconciled to us.

BUT

BUT you will ſay, This may be a Deluſion. Therefore, I ſay, you muſt have both theſe Parts together. They are never diſ-joined. GOD never gives the Witneſs of his Spirit, He never works ſuch an immediate Teſtimony, but it hath always the Teſtimony of the Word going with it. Conſider then, whether ever GOD hath ſpoken this to you, whether ever He hath wrought this Work in you. For Faith, you know, is wrought in this Manner: The Spirit comes, and ſhews *Chriſt* to you; and not only ſhews you his Merits, not only tells you that He will be your Saviour, but ſhews you the Beauty and Excellency of *Chriſt*; it ſhews you what Grace is, and makes you love it, and then He ſhews you Mercy. To this Word He adds a ſecond: *Chriſt* comes and diſcovers Himſelf to a Man, and ſaith to him; I am willing to accept of thee. When this is done on the Holy Ghoſt's Part, and we on our Part reſolve to take Him; this is Faith indeed: When this Work is done, a Man may truly ſay, *This Day is Salvation come* to me. Now thou art ſure that all thy Sins are forgiven, now Faith is wrought in thy Heart.

THIS is one Means to try thy Faith: But becauſe this may be an ambiguous Means, I will ſhew you ſeveral Effects of ſaving Faith, that, ſo by taking a View of theſe, thou mayeſt judge of the Soundneſs and Truth of thy own.

FIRST, if Faith be true it purifies the Heart. Hath thy Faith then ſo brought *Chriſt* into thy Heart, that He lives in thee, as He did in *Paul*; that thou canſt ſay truly, I am *dead to Sin and alive to Righteouſneſs?* That thou haſt *mortified the Deeds of the Body by the Spirit?* That thou findeſt another Life working in thee? For except thou find this; if thou find not ſuch a Life in thyſelf;

if

if thou find thy Heart not purified; if there be not a thorough Reformation of Heart and Life; conclude that thy Faith is not good: It is a Deluſion and not Faith. If the whole Bent of your Mind is turned from the World, and ſet upon *Chriſt*, this is Faith indeed. But know that Faith in *Chriſt* and Covetouſneſs, cannot ſtand together. When thy Mind goeth a whoring after thy Wealth, what haſt thou to do with *Chriſt?* For, to take *Chriſt*, is to turn the Mind from all Things elſe to ſeek Him. Again, if thou wilt have Praiſe with Men, thou canſt not believe; it is impoſſible. And ſo doſt thou think to follow any Pleaſure, or Luſt to ſatisfy thy Fleſh, and to have *Chriſt* too? No, thou canſt not: It is another Kind of Taking. You muſt turn in good Earneſt, turn to GOD upon ſound Ground. Therefore now let us come to the Examination of this.

WE think that Faith is nothing but a Perſwaſion that our Sins are forgiven: And thence it is, that Men are apt to be decieved in it. If we took Faith as it is in Truth, to be a Marrying of ourſelves to *Chriſt*, with all our Hearts and Affections; when He hath given Himſelf to us, as in Marriage, and we are given to Him, in ſo doing we ſhould never be deceived. Now if thou wouldſt know whether thy Faith be right, examine it as thou wouldſt examine another Thing. If you find Wine flat and dead, when you drink it, if it warms you not at the Heart, if it revives not your Spirits, you will ſay, It is naught; if it were good Wine, it would do this. If in the Spring you come to look on a Plant, and find no Fruit, nor Leaves thereon, you ſay, this Plant is dead: So I ſay, if thou find not in Faith this Effect upon thy Heart, that it works a general Change in thee, and fires not thy Soul with Love to *Chriſt* and his Ways; know that thou art

deceived; reſt not in thy preſent Faith, caſt it away, and get a right Faith, ſuch as will not deceive thee. Thus much for the right Sign of effectual Faith.

SECONDLY, if thou wouldſt know whether thy Faith be true or no, conſider whether thou haſt the Spirit of Prayer: For whereſoever there is a Spirit of Faith, there is alſo a Spirit of Prayer. Faith you know, is wrought in us by the Spirit of Adoption. Now the Spirit of Adoption is the Spirit that tells you that ye are Sons. And whenſoever the Spirit tells a Man he is a Son, it teacheth him to pray: and therefore thoſe Words were added, that you cry, *Abba, Father:* That is, if thou have the Spirit, it will make thee able to do two Things. 1. It will make thee cry; thy Prayers which thou makeſt ſhall be earneſt, and fervent; whereas they were cold before. And 2. not only ſo, but thou ſhalt ſpeak to Him, as to a Father; that is, thou ſhalt go to GOD, and look upon Him, as one doth upon a Father, upon One whoſe Love he is ſure of, of whoſe Favour he doubts not. It may be thou haſt prayed to GOD before, but not as to a Father: It is the Work of the Spirit to enable thee to do this; and this it does whenever it gives the Teſtimony of Sonſhip.

BUT perhaps you will ſay, every Body can pray. My Brethren, be not deceived. The Prayer I mean, is not a Work of the Memory, or of the Wit. A Man that hath a good Wit, a ready Invention, or a voluble Tongue, may make an excellent Prayer, in his own Eſteem, and in the Eſteem of others, but this is not truly to pray. True Prayer is the Work of GOD's Spirit. There is one Prayer which is the Voice of our own Spirit: There is a ſecond Prayer, which is the Voice of GOD's Spirit in us: that is, When the Heart comes to

ſpeak

ſpeak as it is quickned, as it is actuated and moved by GOD's Spirit. Now, GOD *knows the Voice of his own Spirit: For that maketh Requeſt according to his Will.* But the Prayers which are made by the Voice of our own Spirit, He knows not; that is, He hearkens not to them. Conſider then whether thy Prayer be ſuch, or whether, as it ought, it be the Voice of GOD's Spirit in thee.

BUT thou wilt ſay, How ſhould I know that? Thou ſhalt know it thus; Doſt thou come to Him as to a Father? A Man prays to GOD, it maybe, all his Life, but he comes to him as a Stranger: Now canſt thou come to GOD as to a Friend? As to a Father, as to one whoſe Favour thou art aſſured of? If thou canſt do this, then it is the Voice of GOD's Spirit in thee, then He regardeth thy Prayers: If not, be ſure it is no true Prayer; and if there be no true Prayer, there is no Faith.

THIRDLY, If thou haſt Faith, thou haſt Peace: For Faith pacifies the Heart as well as purifies it; as the Apoſtle ſaith, *Rom.* v. 1. *Being juſtified by Faith, we have Peace with* GOD. Haſt thou then that Peace that paſſeth all Underſtanding? You know, if a Man were an hundred Pounds in Debt, and ready to be caſt into Priſon, and ſaw not how to eſcape, and one ſhould promiſe to pay the Debt, and deliver him; if he believe this Friend, he is full of Peace; ſo if thou believe thy Pardon to be good, there will be Peace.

BUT you will ſay, "There is many a Man hath Peace, who hath no Faith." True: But I would aſk; Is it a Peace that comes after War? Haſt thou Knowledge of that Enmity between GOD and thee? Haſt thou had the Senſe of it, and after this, haſt thou been reconciled again? Is it an unut-

terable Calm that followed after a Storm? If ſo, it is true Peace. But as I ſaid before, if thou haſt been always eaſy, certainly this is a falſe Peace. When a Man is at Peace, not becauſe he hath eſcaped the Danger, but becauſe he never ſaw it, his Peace is blind; it is not true Peace. Again, conſider, Whether it be ſuch a Peace as caſt out *Satan*; and whether thou findeſt him aſſaulting thy Peace again. For, be thou aſſured, if *Satan* be caſt out, he will not let thee alone; thou ſhalt be ſure to have thy Peace aſſaulted; he will make many Rebellions againſt thee by the Fleſh and the World: And therefore, if thou find all quiet; if there are no ſuch Aſſaults in thee, be thou aſſured it is counterfeit Peace. But ſtill remember this, that if there be Faith, there will be Peace; that is, the Heart will be at Reſt, it will be quiet in GOD.

LASTLY, The Concomitants of Faith, are Love, Joy and Humility. If therefore thy Faith be good, it will always have Love joined with it. Therefore, if thou wouldſt know, Whether thou haſt taken *Chriſt* indeed, conſider, whether thou loveſt Him, or no.

PERHAPS you will ſay, "O yes, I love *Chriſt*; I hope there is no Queſtion of that." Every Man ſaith he loves Him, but where ſhall one find one that loves Him indeed? Conſider, Doſt thou love Him in good Earneſt? If ſo, thou needeſt not go far to make Trial of it: Thou mayſt find it in thine Heart. For Love is the moſt ſenſible, the moſt active Affection of all others. If thou love the LORD *Jeſus*, thou feeleſt thy Affections ſtirring in thee towards Him, thy Heart longing after Him. Thou hateſt Sin, as being that which He hateth. Thou loveſt the Saints, thoſe that are like GOD, that are of ſuch a Diſpoſition as He is of. Thou

art

art willing to part with any Thing for *Chriſt*'s Sake, thy Wealth, thy Credit, thy Liberty, thy All. Therefore, conſider if Faith hath begotten ſuch a Love in thee; then thou canſt truly ſay, *Tho' thou haſt not ſeen Him, yet thou loveſt Him.*

THE ſecond Concomitant of Faith is Joy: So 1 Pet. i. 8. *In whom you have believed: Whom tho' you have not ſeen, yet you believe in Him, and joy with Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory:* the Apoſtle plainly intimating, that where there is Faith, there is Joy. And it muſt needs be ſo: As you know, he that had the Pearl, *went away rejoicing*; and, *the Kingdom of* GOD *conſiſteth in Joy, and Peace, and Righteouſneſs.* Therefore conſider, and examine thine own Caſe: Haſt thou this Rejoicing in *Chriſt?* This Rejoicing in the Forgiveneſs of Sins? If we ſhould examine Men's Faith by this, we ſhould find that there is but little in the World. Examine yourſelves then, you that now hear me; it may be it hath been tedious unto you; it may be Juſtification and Forgiveneſs of Sins are Things you take no great Pains for; you do not prize them much: but, if you were forgiven indeed, you would prefer it before all other Joy; it would comfort you above any Thing. A Man that hath known the Bitterneſs of Sin, and hath afterward come to the Aſſurance of Forgiveneſs, (that is) to have Faith indeed, will rejoice in it above all Things elſe: All worldly Joy would be Nothing to it.

BUT here you muſt be very wary; for there is a falſe Joy: And therefore if thou wouldſt know whether the Joy which thou haſt be good or no, conſider whether it hold out in Tribulation. The Apoſtle ſays, Rom. v. 3. *Not only ſo, but we rejoice alſo in Tribulation:* As if he ſhould ſay, where there is a falſe Faith, there may be much Rejoicing for a

while; but we rejoice in Tribulations; yea, we not only rejoice in Tribulations, but our Joy is encreaſed by them; they are as Fuel, they add to our Joy: As in Acts v. *The Diſciples went away Rejoicing, becauſe they were accounted worthy to ſuffer for* Chriſt.

THE laſt Concomitant of Faith is Humility. If thy Faith be right, it will make thee vile in thine own Eyes. For what is true Faith, but that which brings *Chriſt* into the Heart, that which cauſeth Him to come and dwell with thee? Now whereſoever *Chriſt* comes to dwell, He ſhews the Creature his Vileneſs, He makes him ſee what Creature he is; whereas another that vainly profeſſeth he hath much Aſſurance, his Heart is lifted up. You know, when GOD drew near to *Job*, then he ſaw what a One He was which (he ſaw not before) *and abhorred himſelf in Duſt and Aſhes.*

To conclude, if that be the Virtue of Faith to be effectual, then if you have Faith, uſe it. This you are able to do. For tho' GOD work in you all the Work of Faith, yet He doth not work *in* you only, but *by* you; He makes you Inſtruments; not dead, but living Inſtruments, to move of your ſelves. It is true, that before you have Faith, you can do nothing. Before a Man hath Life, he is not able to ſtir; but when he hath Life, then he is able to move and ſtir; ſo likewiſe when he hath Faith. When the Lamp is once lighted, you may feed it with Oil; and if you put more Oil to it, you ſhall have the greater Flame. The Difficulty is to light it; and that is GOD's Work; He kindles the firſt Fire, He works Faith in the Heart. But now, when thou haſt it, learn to uſe it. Doſt thou think a Neceſſity lies upon us to uſe other Talents, and not the Talent of Faith? According

to

to Scripture, GOD rewards not Men according to the Habits they have only, but according to their Works: Therefore think not that thou ſhalt be rewarded according to thy Habits of Faith only: For GOD rewards us according to the Uſe of our Faith, according to the Works it brings forth, according to the Efficacy of it. Set thyſelf awork then, and thy Reward ſhall be accordingly.

AGAIN, many have Faith, and uſe it not; but if thou uſe it not, thou ſhalt have little enough of it: The uſing of it, ſtrengthens it. It is GOD's uſual Manner, when He gives Faith to a Man, to give him Exerciſe to keep his Faith breathing. If a Man have an Eſtate, what is he the better, if he uſe it not? What is a Man the better for a Friend, if he do not uſe him? Faith makes a Man a Friend to GOD; and will you make no Uſe of GOD? Will you have GOD in vain? Shall he be your GOD, and will you not uſe his Power, his Wiſdom, his Ability to hold you up, to help you upon all Occaſions? You ſhould make Uſe of Him; and then all that is his, is yours, if you make Uſe of it by Faith.

AGAIN, if Faith be uſed, it is able to do much for us; if it lye ſtill, it will do nothing. Look how much thou uſeſt thy Faith, ſo much thou ſhalt be able to do. Therefore *Chriſt* ſaith, *Be it according to thy Faith:* That is, not according to the Habit of thy Faith, that lies dead, as a Talent wrapped up there; but, be it according to the Uſe of thy Faith. If thou ſet Faith on work, it will be able to do Wonders; to overcome the World; to work Righteouſneſs; to prevail with GOD and Men; it is able to go thro' the greateſt Matters.

THEN uſe thy Faith in comforting thyſelf; for that is one Uſe of it: Thou ſhouldſt ſet it awork, to fill thy Heart with Joy, out of the Aſſurance of the Forgiveneſs of Sin, and of the Privileges which thou haſt by *Chriſt*.

AGAIN, if a Man ſet his Faith to work, he would be able to uſe the World, as if he uſed it not; he would not care for Loſſes and Croſſes, he would not grieve for them. He might walk with GOD in the upper Region, above the Storms. There is much Variety of Weather here below; now it is fair, and then it is foul; if a Man were above theſe, there is a continual Serenity: So it is with a Man that hath his Heart in Heaven; he ſoars aloft as the Eagle, and cares no more for Things below, than the Eagle cares for the Chirping of Sparrows. If I have GOD, what is the Loſs of a Friend, of any Creature? If a Man ſuffer Wrong in his Name, what is it, if he have *Praiſe of* GOD? Believe, ſee GOD in his Greatneſs, have Praiſe of Him, and that will make thee contemn the Reſt. What is Poverty to one that hath Treaſure in Heaven, to one that ſeeth he hath all GOD's Treaſures opened to him. If a Man would ſet his Faith at work in good Earneſt, he would *be afraid of no evil Tidings*; he would ſay with himſelf, if there be no ill Tidings from Heaven, it is no Matter what comes on Earth; his Heart would be filled with Joy, and he would go *thro' ill Report and good Report, thro' Want, and thro' Abundance*, without being troubled with either; the one would not puff him up, nor the other deject him.

SECONDLY, ſet Faith on work to ſanctify you, to mortify your Luſts, to revive and ſtrengthen you, in the inward Man, and to make it quick in every

every good Work. Faith is exceeding effectual to do this.

SET Faith on work, to believe the Forgiveneſs of thy Sins, to believe the Love of GOD towards thee. This ſhall turn thy Heart from thy Sins to GOD: For there is no Way to mortify Luſts, and to quicken thy Heart, but to delight in GOD. The more thou believeſt that GOD is thine, the more Victory thou ſhalt get over thy Sins. If thou look on GOD as a Judge, that will turn thee away from Him; but when thou lookeſt upon Him as upon one that loves thee, this will win thine Heart to Him, and turn it from Sin, and thou ſhalt find Sin die and wither in thee, and thy Heart to grow in Grace. Whatſoever Sin is weaken'd by other Means it only lyeth hid: But when thou once loveſt GOD, if *Chriſt* ſhould come to thee and ſay, "If thou love Me, diſdain ſuch a Thing which I hate; *keep my Commandments*; let not thy Converſation be in Wantonneſs, *in Strife and Envying*; labour to glorify my Name, and to do Good to Mankind; be diligent in thy Calling;" thou wouldſt gladly obey. So then, when thou wouldſt have thy Sanctification encreaſed, encreaſe thy Faith. The more thou believeſt, the more the Spirit of *Chriſt* is conveyed into thy Soul. The ſtronger thy Faith is, the more the Sap ſhall flow from *Chriſt*; the more largely He will ſend his Spirit into thy Heart, that makes thee joy in Him, and cauſeth thee to die to Sin, and live to Righteouſneſs.

The End of the NINTH VOLUME.

6 JY 64

THE CONTENTS Of the NINTH VOLUME.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Page

A TREATISE *concerning the* WORD *of* GOD.

THE Contents and Benefit of the *Pſalms* — 5
The Diviſion of the 119th *Pſalm*, and what it teaches — — — — 6
True Wiſdom to be had only from and in the Word 7
All our Knowledge muſt be practical — 8
The 14th Verſe of the 119th *Pſalm* explained — 9
What is meant by *the Word* — — 11
What by *Light* — — — — 12
What by *Feet* — — — — 13
What by *Paths* — — — — 14
The Doctrines gather'd from the 105th Verſe ib.
All Means but the Word inſufficient to bring us to Heaven — — — — — 15
The Word itſelf inſufficient in the Letter only 18
Regeneration wrought by the Word — — 19
The Word is able to ſanctify the whole Man — 20
Admonition to take the Word for our Guide — ib.
Motives thereunto — — — 22
Objections againſt Hearing the Word, anſwer'd 28
Objection that frequent Preaching cauſes Tumults and Uneaſineſs, anſwered — — 32
The Sleights of *Satan* to hinder the Word from taking Effect — — — 34

The

The CONTENTS.

Page

The Methods of *Satan* to hinder Converſion — 36
There are ſeveral unſound Converſions — 37
Fruits of true Converſion — — —ib. 41
Satan deals with Men as *Pharaoh* with the *Iſraelites* 38
Comfortable Conſiderations againſt Afflictions — 45
Why the Wicked hate and perſecute the Godly 49
GOD's Aim in his Children's Afflictions — ib. 139
Satan would hinder Men from profiting by the Word, by tempting them to ſpiritual Pride 50
Preparations required to profitable Hearing — 51
Motives to Preparation — — — 53
How the Heart ſhould be prepared *before* Hearing ib.
The Advantage of this Preparation — 55
What Preparation is — — — ib.
The Duties required *in* Hearing — — 60
Means to underſtand the Word — — 61
Duties required *after* Hearing — — 64

A TREATISE *on* SELF-EXAMINATION.

Examination, what it is — — — 68
Converſion, what it is — — — 69
Graces accompanying ſound Converſion — 71
What we are required to know — — 72
Of the Means of our Recovery from our Natural State — — — — 75
How Chriſtians come to have an Intereſt in *Chriſt* 76
The Sacrament not only a Sign, but a Seal of our Redemption — — — 78
Marks of ſaving Knowledge — — 80
Saving Faith, what it is — — 84, 256
How wrought in the Heart — — 85
Of inſufficient Faiths — — — 89
How far a Man void of ſaving Faith may go in Religion — — — — 93
Objection againſt harſh Doctrine, anſwer'd — 94
By-Paths in Faith to be avoided — — 96
In Affliction take the right Way — — 100
Marks of Saving Faith — — — 103
Difference between Saving and Temporary Faith 129

A TREA-

The CONTENTS.

Page

A TREATISE *on* FASTING.

The Efficacy of Faſting — — 138, 147
Afflictions the Portion of the Godly — — 139
The End for which they are ſent — — ib.
How to know what Sin GOD aims at in afflicting us 142
In all Diſtreſſes we ſhould ſeek to GOD — 144
A Faſt, what it is — — — 145
Two Parts thereof — — — 146
Of the ſeveral Kinds of Faſts — — 148
Of outward Abſtinence — — — 150
Reaſons for it — — — — 151
Of the uſual Time of Faſting — — 152
Of the inward, ſpiritual Exerciſe in Faſting — 154
Helps for Examination and Humiliation, the Taking a right Eſtimate of Sins — — 155
Conſiderations to make Sin loathſome — 160
Divers Ways of Sinning — — — 162
Ways of aggravating Sin ſo as to beget Remorſe 169
How to apprehend GOD's Wrath againſt Sin — 177
Helps to feel the Miſery of Sin — — 178
—— to Self-Abhorrence — — — 183
—— to beget a Sorrow for Sin — — 184
—— to Confeſſion — — — 186
How to attain Hatred of Sin — — 187
Of Duties to be practiſed in Faſting — — 188

EXTRACTS *from the* WORKS *of Dr.* PRESTON.

The Life of Dr. *Preſton* — — — 195

The BREAST-PLATE *of* FAITH *and* LOVE.

PART I. Of Faith — — — 227
The Righteouſneſs of GOD, how revealed — 228
That alone ſaves, and how — — 230
What it is to take *Chriſt* — — — 236
What is to be done when we have Him — 241
Rejecting *Chriſt* the greateſt Sin — — 243
What it is to be worthy of *Chriſt*'s Righteouſneſs 244
Motives to take *Chriſt* — — — 246
Faith only makes GOD's Righteouſneſs ours — 249

The

The CONTENTS.

	Page
The Reaſons why GOD will ſave Men thro' Faith	252
General Faith, what — — —	255
How Faith juſtifieth — — —	260
The Work of it — — — —	263
Chriſt All in All — — — —	266
Morality without Faith not acceptable to GOD	269
Of drawing the Will to take the Promiſes	273
Objections againſt taking *Chriſt*, anſwered	277
The Degrees of Faith — — —	278
Exhortation to grow in Faith — —	283
PART II. Of Effectual Faith — —	285
Only Effectual Faith ſaves — — —	287
Cauſes of the Ineffectualneſs of Faith	288
Wherein the Efficacy of Faith conſiſts	292
How effectual Faith is wrought —	297, 308
The Holy Ghoſt bears Teſtimony two Ways	300
The Spirit of GOD alone is able to prevail upon Men — — — —	301
Why GOD accepts none but effectual Faith	302
The Uſe of the Doctrine — — —	303
To do a Thing in Faith, what — —	306
Signs of effectual Faith — — —	310
Trial of ſound Joy — — —	315
Faith muſt be exerciſed — — —	316
Motives to this — — — —	317
How Faith ſanctifies the Heart — —	318

6 JY 64